From *Imagining a Sultry, Velvety Finish* to *Pixel-Perfect Skin* – How the Language of Cosmetics Advertisements Has Changed from 1990 to 2013

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Tämän pro gradu –tutkielman tavoitteena on tutkia, miten naistenlehdissä esiintyvien kosmetiikkamainosten kieli on muuttunut vuodesta 1990 vuoteen 2013. Mainosten kieltä tutkitaan erilaisten kielellisten piirteiden käytön kautta: tavoitteena on selvittää, miten sanojen välisiä erityyppisiä merkityssuhteita, tieteellistä ja teknologiaan liittyvää sanastoa, sekä alkusointua ja parallelismia käytetään kosmetiikkamainoksissa ja onko näiden kielellisten piirteiden käytössä eroja vuosien 1990 ja 2013 välillä.

Tutkielman teoriaosuudessa käydään läpi mainonnan historiaa sekä englanninkielisten mainosten ominaispiirteitä. Mainoskielen ominaispiirteiden pohjana käytetään Geoffrey N. Leechin vuonna 1966 esittelemää ”Standard Advertising English” –viitekehystä. Teoriaosuudessa myös esitellään sanojen väliset erityyppiset merkityssuhteet: synonymia, hyponymia, meronymia, vastakohtaisuus, homonymia ja polysemia sekä syntagmaattiset merkityssuhteet.

Tutkielman aineistona on 204 kosmetiikkamainosta, jotka on kerätty kuudesta eri naistenlehdestä. Mainoksista löydetyt kielelliset piirteet kerättiin taulukoihin, ja piirteiden esiintymistä eri vuosina vertailtiin toisiinsa kahden eri luokittelun avulla. Ensin löydökset luokiteltiin mainostettavan tuoteryhmän perusteella – ihonhoitotuotteet, hiustuotteet ja meikit – ja toiseksi sen perusteella, mihin tarkoitukseen kielellistä piirrettä oli käytetty: kuvailemaan tuotetta, tuotteen vaikutuksia, tuotteen käyttäjää vai jotain muuta.

Tutkielmassa havaittiin, että tutkimuksen kohteeksi valitut kielelliset piirteet olivat yleisiä kosmetiikkamainoksissa niin vuonna 1990 kuin vuonna 2013. Sanojen välisistä merkityssuhteista synonymia ja polysemia olivat huomattavasti yleisempiä vuonna 1990, kun taas meronymiaa ja syntagmaattisia merkityssuhteita hyödynnettiin enemmän vuonna 2013. Tieteellinen ja teknologiaan liittyvä sanasto oli jonkin verran yleisempää vuonna 2013, kun taas alkusointua ja parallelismia esiintyi saman verran molempien vuosien mainoksissa.

Kielellisten piirteiden esiintymisen perusteella mainonnan kieli ei ole muuttunut kovinkaan paljoa. Analyysin semanttinen osuus kuitenkin osoittaa, että kosmetiikkamainosten kielessä on tapahtunut merkittäviä muutoksia: vuonna 1990 mainoskieli oli flirttailevaa ja ostajia houkuteltiin sanaleikkien avulla, kun taas vuoden 2013 mainoksissa kieli on hillitympää ja tuotteiden taustalla olevaa teknologiaa sekä ammattimaisuutta korostavaa. Tutkimustulokset osoittavat myös, että aiemmin mainoskielen tutkimuksessa vähän huomioidut sanojen väliset erityyppiset merkityssuhteet ovat olennainen osa kosmetiikkamainosten kieltä.

Asiasanat: mainonnan kieli, lehtimainokset, sanojen väliset merkityssuhteet

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1 Introduction

Advertising is such a mundane part of our everyday life that we rarely come to think much more of it: it comes to us everywhere we are, from our homes to the bus stops to our smart phones, in such a volume that we have learned to *not* notice it, when we do not want to. If one was to decide the widest spread platform for written language in the modern society, advertising would be at the top of that list. Advertisements are also known for arousing opinions: some find them irritating, others blame them for increasing consumption, and a third group is aggravated by their impossible promises. However, there are also people who like advertisements and find them amusing, entertaining and useful – as well as an excellent area for research.

Cosmetics advertisements are a case in point in arousing varying opinions. As women's magazines are filled with them, they must have a positive effect on women's purchasing decisions. At the same time, advertisers are constantly accused of manipulating pictures and exaggerating the promised effects of the products, as well as of creating beauty ideals that are impossible to accomplish (Johnson 2008, 108; Leiss et al. 2005, 13). Naomi Wolf's well-known book "The Beauty Myth" (1991) focuses on the ways in which media and culture create a beauty myth that women find both desirable and demeaning, and according to her (1991, 73-75), women's magazines and especially the advertisements in them are among the ones to blame. As Wolf's book was published over 20 years ago and the amount of media has grown enormously, the conversations around beauty ideals and their harming effects have become even more common.

I wrote my BA Thesis on how sense relations are used in the modern-day cosmetics advertisements, and when thinking about a topic for the MA Thesis I came to wonder whether cosmetics advertisements have always been the same, or have they changed in the past decades. The intent of this thesis is thus to study the change in the language of cosmetics advertisements through a combination of linguistic and semantic analysis. The research questions are as follows:

1. How are sense relations used in cosmetics advertisements?
2. How is scientific and technological vocabulary used in cosmetics advertisements?
3. How are alliteration and parallelism used in cosmetics advertisements?
4. Based on the use of these linguistic items, how has the language of cosmetics advertisements changed from 1990 to 2013?

As regards the research questions, I wanted to combine new and older approaches to studying advertising language. The sense relations studied in this thesis are the four paradigmatic sense relations – synonymy, hyponymy, meronymy and types of opposites – as well as the sense relations polysemy, homonymy and syntagmatic sense relations. Sense relations in advertisements have not been studied in great detail earlier, with the exception of polysemy and homonymy that are a common element in creating puns (Tanaka 1994, 60; Myers 1994, 64). On the other hand, alliteration and parallelism are commonly acknowledged features of advertising language, and scientific and technological vocabularies are also regarded to be a typical advertising feature (see for example Leech 1966; Dyer 1982; O'Donnell and Todd 1991; Myers 1994). Thus, by choosing various types of linguistic items the analysis will be a more thorough one.

Although advertising language has been studied from multiple points of view, I still find it to be an interesting and important area of study. As was already stated, advertising language is one of the few literary genres that everyone comes across with. Advertisements are also unique in the way in which they combine old traditions and new innovations to create images that attract attention, amuse the audience *and* sell products (Cook 1992, 217); as noted by Rotzoll (2011, 94), no matter how different advertisements are from one another, they are all "overwhelmingly used with persuasive intent." More specifically, I find cosmetics advertisements interesting as the billion dollar industry is a very competitive one, and the amount of products available enormous. However, the actual differences between similar cosmetics products across different brands are quite

marginal, which makes it the advertiser's job to create product differentiation and an entire image with positive connotations. (Leiss et al. 2005, 300; Rotzoll 2011, 95).

The time frame chosen for this study is from 1990 to 2013. I believe that this period is broad enough to discover changes in the language, considering the multitude of ways in which the world has changed in the past 25 years. As Rotzoll (2011, 97) notes, the surrounding culture and social situation have an effect on advertising; for example, the advances in technology were thought to eliminate magazines and newspapers, and correspondingly the advertising in them, but obviously this is yet to happen (ibid., p.98; Berger 2001, 40). The advertisements studied in this thesis come from six women's magazines, of which three are from 1990 and three from 2013. The total amount of advertisements is 204 advertisements, 75 from 1990 and 129 from 2013. By looking at the ways in which the linguistic features are used in the advertisements, I will construct an overview of how the language of cosmetics advertisements has changed.

This thesis begins with a background chapter on advertising: how have the advertisement industry and advertising practices developed, and what features of advertising language form the basis for Standard Advertising English (Leech 1966). Chapter 3 focuses on the theory on sense relations, and Chapter 4 presents the materials and methods used in this thesis. In Chapter 5, the data is analyzed with the help of figures and examples. The results will be discussed in Chapter 6, and Chapter 7 concludes the thesis.

2 On advertising

As was already stated in the introduction, the world of today is filled with advertising messages. However, about a hundred and fifty years ago the situation was very different, and advertising was only beginning to leave its mark on the society. In order to study and understand modern adverts, one must have knowledge about the development of the trade and the traditions of the genre.

Although the common opinion of advertising seems to be that it is trivial, irritating, and commonplace, advertising has been studied in great detail from a number of different points of view: there are studies on advertising language, sociological studies on advertising's impact, historical reviews on the development of advertising, economy handbooks on effective advertising, feministic views on the matter – and the list goes on. As regards the development of advertising, Daniel Pope's *The Making of Modern Advertising* (1983) is one of the most popular works of advertising literature, focusing on the period before the 1920s and discussing the history of advertising from a critical point of view. Michael Schudson, on the other hand, offers a detailed account of advertising in a historical and sociological context in his book *Advertising, the Uneasy Persuasion* (1984; 1993). While Pope and Schudson both tell the history from an American perspective, Raymond Williams' well-known essay "Advertising; the magic system" (1980) is a vivid description of the British advertising history. Odih (2007), Gorman and McLean (2009) and Leiss, Kline, Jhally and Botterill (2005), on the other hand, offer a 21st century perspective on the matter.

In the field of linguistics, Geoffrey N. Leech's *English in Advertising: A Linguistic Study of Advertising in Great Britain* from 1966 is a very comprehensive account of advertising language, and it still offers useful insights on the matter. Also Myers (1994) and O'Donnell and Todd (1991) have significantly contributed to the studies on advertising language, especially in broadening the

scope to discuss not only linguistic features, but also how advertisements and the language used in them affect the society as a whole.

In this chapter, the historical development of advertising will be outlined, as well as the typical features of advertising language. The chapter will focus on larger tendencies rather than individual advertising campaigns or agencies, and mostly on print advertising, as print advertisements also serve as the data of the study. For the same reason, the focus is on commercial consumer advertising rather than trade or retail advertising (terms from Leech 1966, 25). It must be noted that advertising histories are always written with an agenda, and the history discussed here combines different sources to create an overall image of the development of advertising. Although we have become accustomed to advertisements and often disregard them, they still seem to have an effect on us – it might be irritation, frustration, admiration or an urge to buy, but nevertheless, there is an effect.

2.1 The history of advertising

As Raymond Williams (1980, 170) put it, advertising "is as old as human society." Oral advertising was a part of everyday life already in the ancient Greece, and later in the medieval markets in Europe (Pope 1983, 4). The first printed advertisements emerged shortly after the new printing presses started to spread in the fifteenth century (Fletcher 2008, 11). However, it was not until the seventeenth century that advertising could be seen as anything organized, with the rising number of newspapers appearing both in Britain and in America (ibid.; Applegate 1998, 8). The advertisements in these early newspapers were simple and short, resembling the classified advertisements of today. The language was for the most part factual, and persuasive tactics were used only in the adverts for patent medicine (Gorman and McLean 2009, 70). Besides patent medicine and some luxury items, products were rarely advertised, simply because there was no need

for it: in the small communities, people knew where they could buy every day commodities. Instead, there were adverts for slaves on sale, the announcements of plays, and advertisements for missing or stolen items (Williams 1980, 172; Applegate 1998, 11-14). Thus, the texts labeled as advertisements were in many ways different from their modern counterparts.

In the eighteenth century, the number of newspapers grew constantly, which made manufacturers more and more interested in investing in advertising. In Britain, the government decided that the growing advertising industry should be legislated and in 1712, the Stamp Duty on newspaper announcements was imposed (Odih 2007, 31). Although the Stamp Duty decelerated the growth of advertising, it did not stop it entirely, and the growing "literate middle class" that were frequent visitors in coffee houses were the perfect audience for advertising new luxuries, such as coffee and cosmetics (Vestergaard and Schrøder 1985, 4). Advertising took a new step forward with the publicizing of newspapers devoted solely to advertising, such as the *Pennsylvania Packet and the General Advertiser* and the *Daily Advertiser* in London (Applegate 1998, 19; Odih 2007, 31). The eighteenth century also saw the emergence of magazines, but advertisers were not at first keen to advertise in them, as most of the new magazines were economically unstable and therefore short-lived, and they lacked the established readerships that newspapers had (Applegate 1998, 22).

In the nineteenth century, newspaper advertising was still confined to small columns and strict word counts, which led to the growth of display advertising in the streets of the growing cities: "posters, billboards, sandwich boards, and eventually advertisements on streetcars, buses and trains, and electric signs" (Gorman and McLean 2009, 70). These new forms of advertising offered more room for illustrations and color, but they also had economic benefits, as posters "were not subject to advertising duty." (Odih 2007, 27) In Britain, the industry fully began its rise as the Stamp Duty was abolished in 1855 (ibid., p.35). Although newspaper advertising became cheaper, more and more advertisers were turning to magazines and posters because of the creative freedom they offered (Odih 2007, 35-39). Magazines also had the advantage of specialized audiences, which gave

advertisers a group of potential buyers at once (Gorman and McLean 2009, 15). Newspapers were eventually forced to give in on their strict column restrictions, and by the end of the century also newspapers had illustrated adverts (Odih 2007, 40).

The Industrial Revolution in the latter part of the nineteenth century changed the world drastically, also for advertising. People were moving to cities, products were no longer purchased from the market next door, and the new factories introduced mass-production. Developments in transportation and communications made it possible to distribute both products and information. Suddenly there were multiple manufacturers producing very similar goods, and advertising became crucial to make a product stand out from the masses (Gorman and McLean 2009, 71; Pope 1983, 31). The emergence of department stores in the 1860s and 1870s on both sides of the Atlantic offered new consuming possibilities, and department stores were among the most enthusiastic advertisers (Gorman and McLean 2009, 70; Schudson 1993, 152).

One of the major shifts in advertising happened in the 1880s, when the first brand names appeared and products started to be advertised with the help of the brand (Gorman and McLean 2009, 71). The message of advertisements changed crucially, as it was no longer sufficient to recite the facts of the product: instead, the buyer had to be persuaded and the product had to be distinctive (ibid., p.70; Myers 1994, 20). The brand names served also another purpose: with the new mass-production, products were no longer local and manufacturers were unknown. People could not be sure of the origins of the product in the way they had been accustomed to, and the new brands tapped into this dilemma: as Schudson (1993, 159) puts it, people were searching for "the guarantee of predictability that brand names would provide." When the earlier advertisements had been designed to arouse interest in the product's novelty and make people buy it immediately, the new brands aspired to create a long-standing and trustworthy relationship between the brand and the potential buyer (Fletcher 2008, 18). This also affected the audience: as noted by Pope (1983, 249), "[p]urchasers were becoming consumers." This new "reason-why" –advertising still focused solely

on the "properties of the product, and its price and availability", but now the facts were coloured with favourable associations (Myers 1994, 20). According to Leiss et al. (2005, 153-155), this product-oriented approach was the prominent type of advertising in the period from 1890 to 1925.

With these new demands on advertising in the changing economy, the advertisers needed more professionalism to respond to the challenge. The end of the nineteenth century marked the true beginning of advertising as an industry, as modern advertising agencies were founded both in Britain and in the United States (Williams 1980, 178; Applegate 1998, 38). Before, in the 1840s and 1850s, advertising agents had worked as space sellers, while the manufacturers wrote the advertisements themselves – the advertisers worked for the press, not for the manufacturers. In the last two decades of the nineteenth century advertising truly became a profession, with creative copywriters and business-oriented space sellers joining their forces and designing adverts specifically for the producers, and then selling them for the most suitable magazine or newspaper (Gorman and McLean 2009, 71; Leiss et al. 2005, 132-133; Schudson 1993, 171).

Along with the new technologies for mass production, the mass-circulation press was founded, and the new magazines and newspapers grew more and more dependent on advertising revenue (Gorman and McLean 2009, 70). As the industry expanded rapidly, the advertisers fought for customers fiercely: they praised their own products while explicitly slandering the competition and everyone claimed to have the most affordable products (Pope 1983, 198-200). Completely false promises were especially prominent in patent medicine advertisements, which was the most advertised product group in the 1890s (ibid., pp.45 and 185). There was an apparent need for regulation, and although the agencies at first objected to it, they soon realised that public mockery of the competing products only gave the competitors more publicity (Pope 1983, 198-200) The governments answered the call: in Great Britain, the Indecent Advertisement Act was passed in 1889, the Joint Censorship Committee was established a year later, and in 1898, the National Society for Checking the Abuses of Public Advertising (SCAPA) was set up. In the United States

this development happened a little later, as the Federal Trade Commission Act was passed in 1914 (Odih 2007, 30-31; Leiss et al. 2005, 586). Advertising thus became more regulated, but also more creative: as false claims were now finally punishable and the competition could not be dismissed, one needed to find new ways to make the product worthy of purchase.

In the first two decades of the twentieth century, reason-why –advertising started to be replaced with human interest advertising, especially when advertising "products with strong emotional connotations for buyers" (Pope 1983, 237-243). This type of advertising became even more common after World War I in the 1920s, when advertisers started to realize that it was most often women who were making the purchasing decisions in the families (Schudson 1993, 173). This was the time when women's rights blossomed, and advertisers noticed a niche in the market, portraying "consumption as the expression of female freedom and autonomy and as the path to fulfillment" (Gorman and McLean 2009, 75). The decade also saw the birth – and fall – of numerous popular magazines, especially women's magazines (Leiss et al. 2005, 106).

Despite the steps towards equality in the society at large, in the advertising world the dichotomy between rational men and emotional women was still strong. That is why advertisements focused more and more on the emotions of the consumer, and less on the facts (Schudson 1993, 61; Myers 1994, 23). Adverts were no longer selling mere products, they were selling a lifestyle; as Gorman and McLean (2009, 73) put it, now advertisements "aimed to convince consumers that health, social success, sex appeal, and marital happiness would result from the use of Ipana toothpaste, Palmolive soap, Chesterfield cigarettes, and countless other mass-produced goods." Leiss et al. (2005, 155) call this stage, spanning from about 1925 to 1945, the time of product symbols. In addition to positive associations and promises of happiness, advertisers also tapped into the consumer's fears and insecurities, showing what could happen if you did not buy a particular brand (Myers 1994, 23). In accordance with this, advertisers created new problems, such as dandruff and halitosis, and, naturally, new products to solve these problems (ibid., p.24; Gorman

and McLean 2009, 73). In the fear of post-war-depression the competition for buyers was tougher than ever, and according to Leiss et al. (2005, 68), the 1920s were "advertising's golden age."

The 1920s changed advertising also in other ways. The radio was invented, and in the United States it depended solely on advertising revenue from the start (Gorman and McLean 2009, 73-76; Myers 1994, 23). Radio advertising was most often used as a supplement to print advertisements, as products and brands started to be advertised via more structured campaigns (Gorman and McLean 2009, 73; Pope 1983, 244). Advertisers began to do more and more market research, also in Britain (Fletcher 2008, 20; Pope 1983, 141-143). By the 1930s, with the addition of the new marketing specialists to the agencies, the structure of the industry began to be stabilized (Pope 1983, 294; Williams 1980, 179). The global recession and World War II beginning in 1939 halted advertising's growth, but after the war, the industry soon returned to blossom (Fletcher 2008, 19). In the late 1940s, radio advertising was at its highest both in the United States and in Great Britain, but this did not last for long, as it was soon replaced from its top spot by commercial television (Leiss 2005, 112; Fletcher 2008, 88).

Television, with the advantages of sound and moving picture, was thought to bring an end to print advertising. Magazines and newspapers, however, had some advantages of their own, the most important being colored pages and possibilities for targeted audiences (Fletcher 2008, 29-30; Leiss et al. 2005, 107). The media and advertising industries were at this point completely intertwined – that is, the media was fully dependent on advertising – which led to a growing criticism towards advertising: advertisers were accused of raising prices and creating false needs (Gorman and McLean 2009, 77-78). Television also faded the boundaries between public and private lives, as it brought advertising to the living rooms (Fletcher 2008, 27). The growing public criticism had an effect on the consumers, and the common opinion of the now inescapable advertisements was that of indifference and mistrust (Myers 1994, 26; Vestergaard and Schrøder 1985, 5).

The advertising industry responded to the criticism with a new sense of humor and irony, and the 1960s were marked by a creative revolution that swept through advertising and the culture in general (Berger 2001, 19; Fletcher 2008, 62). The creative revolution brought along with it not only adverts that mocked themselves and offered the reader an active role (Myers 1994, 26), but also more business-mindedness, with focus strategies that were "based on segmenting markets, targeting audiences, and positioning products" (Pope 1983, 288-289). Leiss et al. (2005, 157) call this period, from 1965 to 1985, the stage of market segmentation – different product groups were advertised in different media, and advertisements were only one part of larger promotional campaigns.

Advertising did not change so much in the last decades of the twentieth century: although some agencies focused on creating constantly new ideas, some returned to strategies that had already proven their effectiveness (Berger 2001, 78). A change was expected in the 1990s with the spread of the Internet, with the common belief that it would "kill" traditional advertising (ibid., p. 40). The agencies were not to go down without a fight, and the years right before and after the millennium were marked with "offbeat" anti-advertising (Berger 2001, p. 164 and 185). The anticipated rise of web-based advertising did happen, but two decades later than expected: according to Advertising Age Marketing Fact Pack 2014 (2013, 16), it was not until 2012 that the Internet became the second-largest advertising media in the United States with a 19.0 per cent share of advert spending – which is still only a half of the amount spent in television advertising (38.8%). In the 21st century, advertising has remained surprisingly traditional, although it has become even more pervasive: the growing social media is filled with advertisements, and all the while the traditional advertisements in print media, television and billboards keep on existing. Adverts nowadays are a natural part of the society, and because of this, it is now even more difficult to really stand out from the crowd. Nevertheless, advertising must work: why else would it be a multi-billion-dollar industry?

So how exactly has advertising come to be what it is today? From about 1600 to 1850 advertising developed slow and steady, while the next hundred years built the industry to what it is today in a rapid pace. The development of mass-production brought with it the abundance of both products and media, advertising agencies were founded, rules and regulations were formed, and advertising techniques developed from product-oriented to brand-oriented to consumer-oriented. From about 1940 onwards, the most notable changes have happened in the media outlets used for advertising, and the techniques used have become more variable. The advertising industry has pulled through times of war and economic recession, and not even the Internet could kill it – there really seems to be no end for advertising. Berger's (2001, 465) answer to the question "Where does advertising go from here?" is still relevant – and his answer is, "everywhere".

2.2 Typical features of advertising English

As a genre, advertising language is rather peculiar. It differs from other written or spoken genres in many ways: for example, there is no emphasis on the producer of the text, and advertisements are most often embedded within another discourse type, like a television programme or a magazine (Cook 1992, 29, 75). Advertising language is constantly changing and evolving as all advertisements try to stand out from the mass – as Cook (ibid., p. 217) puts it, "[v]irtually any statement about advertising becomes outdated as soon as it is made". If an advertisement is seen as "typical", it ceases to be effective. However, there are some features that seem to keep their relevance in the language of advertising. Geoffrey N. Leech (1966) coined the term "Standard Advertising English" nearly fifty years ago, and these standards can still be seen in the modern-day advertisements.

In this section, the typical features of advertising language will be presented with the help of examples that have been taken from cosmetics advertisements found in *In Style* September 2013. A

more detailed account is given on alliteration and parallelism as well as scientific and technological vocabulary, since, as was mentioned in the introduction, these are the linguistic features that, in addition to sense relations, are the object of study in this thesis.

2.2.1 Sentence structure

At the level of sentence structure, advertisers tend to favour short sentences, and imperatives and interrogatives are the two most common sentence types (O'Donnell and Todd 1991, 105; Leech 1966, 111). Both commands and questions can be used to create a sense of familiarity, as they both address the reader directly, with questions also expecting an "answer" from the reader (Myers 1994, 49; Delin 2000, 140). The short sentences are more often linked together by co-ordination than by subordination (O'Donnell and Todd 1991, 105), as in the advert for L'Oréal's Youth Code Texture Perfector: "Refines & perfects skin. Even at pixel-level."

The majority of advertisements are written in the present tense, as the "virtues of the product are for all time, like the laws of nature" (Leech 1966, 124). Past tense is used only in a few restricted situations: to describe the situation "before" the use of the product, to emphasize the brand's history and traditions, or to mark the product's reliability (ibid.; O'Donnell and Todd 1991, 107). To give an example, according to the advert "69% of women saw reduction of dark spots" when using Lancôme DreamTone Customized Skin Tone Correcting Serum. A related feature of the sentence structure of advertising English is that clauses are often non-finite or incomplete without any verbs at all (Leech 1966, 113; Myers 1994, 55), as exemplified by Lancôme's advertisement for Artliner 24H: "Effortless precision. Non-stop color. So chic." Myers (1994, 55) notes that this kind of ellipsis of elements not only shortens the text of the advertisement and makes it more effective, but it also requires the readers to "write themselves into the ad."

2.2.2 Vocabulary

While verbs are sometimes omitted entirely, the vocabulary of advertisements abounds with adjectives (Leech 1966, 151). Most of the adjectives used in advertisements are favorable, and adjectives with a negative connotation are only used to describe something that the product advertised can erase (ibid., pp.153-159). According to Dyer (1982, 308), the most popular adjective is *new*, as it can be used "in connection with almost every type of product or service, from insurances to fish fingers, and [it] applies to any number of their features: size, shape, colour, formula and so on." *New* was the most often used adjective also in Leech's study (1966, 151-152).

Advertisers often create adjectival compounds or have combinations of two or three adjectives as pre- or postmodifiers (Leech 1966, 129): for example, Chanel Sublimage is "the complete anti-aging skincare for a revitalized, smooth and supple complexion". Adjectives are often used in the comparative and superlative forms, and especially comparative reference is used rather uniquely in advertisements. As one cannot make implicit claims about other products than their own, the item the product is compared to has to be left out, which results in statements such as "Doesn't your skin deserve better care?", as is asked in the advert for Dove Deep Moisture (Goddard 1998, 104). This is an example of vague language, which is employed in advertising also in another ways; words like *quality* and *excellence* are often found in advertisements without any actual proof for the product's superiority (Myers 1994, 68).

Although most of the vocabulary used in advertising is simple, for the obvious reason that advertisements must be comprehensible to a vast audience, it is not uncommon to come across scientific or technical vocabulary in advertising (O'Donnell and Todd 1991, 105; Dyer 1982, 305). In most cases it is not necessary for the reader to truly understand what the meaning of a certain scientific term is, as these words are most often used for prestige, in the same way as name-dropping (O'Donnell and Todd 1991, 105; Leech 1966, 101). Although Leech was of the opinion that besides the name-dropping function these kinds of words cannot be used in advertising

language, the world has changed drastically in the past 50 years, and both Johnson (2008, 164) and Dyer (1982, 305) note that nowadays borrowing from the scientific discourse is a common feature of advertising language. Johnson (2008, 164) also addresses the importance of technological vocabulary in modern-day advertising.

Sometimes only the use of the word *technology* or *science* can be enough to make the advertised product sound convincing and effective (Johnson 2008, 164-165; Dyer 1982, 305): Aloxxi Thickening Serum includes "Apple Stem Cell Technology", and Origins Smarty Plants CC foundation is "Powered by Nature. Proven by Science." Johnson (ibid., p. 168) notes that this kind of use of technological vocabulary is especially common in advertising cosmetics products. Other usages of scientific and technological vocabulary include product names and ingredients: the name for Smashbox Liquid Halo HD Foundation refers to HD technology, and the nail polishes in Essie Fall Collection 2013 are "DBP, Toluene and Formaldehyde free".

2.2.3 Devices of memorability and attention

The aim of advertising is to increase sales, and to make the product or brand in question stand out from the group of other advertisements. For this reason, advertisers try their best to make their advertisements memorable (Leech 1966, 29). Language is used in multiple ways to make the message of the advertisement stick: an unusual brand name, punning i.e. playing with multiple meanings of a word, the use of repetitive patterns such as alliteration, parallelism and rhyme, and the repetition of slogans are all used for this purpose (ibid., pp.29 and 77; O'Donnell and Todd 1991, 109; Tanaka 1994, 80).

Alliteration is the repetition of initial consonant sounds, as opposed to *assonance* which is the repetition of initial vocals (Myers 1994, 32-33; Dyer 1982, 313). It is important to note that alliteration refers to sounds, not letters (Delin 2000, 134). According to Myers (1994, 32), alliteration is especially common in slogans, and plosives such as *p, t,* and *k* are the most often used

sounds as they make a larger impact (ibid, pp.32-33). For example, in the name for Clarins Double Serum Complete Age Control Concentrate the words with the initial /k/ -sound form alliteration, and the classic Maybelline slogan – "Maybe she's born with it. Maybe it's Maybelline." – combines both repetition and alliteration.

In *parallelism* formal patterns, such as sentences, are repeated (Leech 1966, 188; Dyer 1982, 313). Parallel structures can be very brief, or the entire body of text of the advertisement can be built up on parallelism (Delin 2000, 135). Both alliteration and parallelism are often used to first build a pattern of regularity in the text and then break it, thus creating a reaction in the reader (Myers 1994, 54). The advertisement for La Mer Moisturising Cream employs both alliteration and parallelism in its copy, with a deviation from the pattern in the end: "Radiance is restored, fine lines fade, skin looks softer, firmer, virtually ageless." As Dyer (1982, 310), puts it, both alliteration and parallelism "attract attention and arouse emotions." Typography and layout are also often employed to emphasize the effect of these linguistic regularities (Leech 1966, 190). A common way to do this is to create a list with a parallel structure, as is done in the advert for Aveeno Clear Complexion BB Cream which "Nourishes…Corrects…Protects".

Yet another way to stand out is to make unusual choices in print – playing with font sizes or upper and lower case letters, using unexpected letters or spellings, or borrowing from the typography of other languages, such as Chinese or Russian (Myers 1994, 38-40; Goddard 1998, 17). For example, the entire advertisement for "philosophy full of promise restoring eye duo" is written in lower case letters, and RoC's Multi Correxion 5in1 Daily Moisturizer makes an attempt to stand out with the non-standard spelling of the word "correction". The text and pictures of a print advertisement can also be merged together (Dyer 1982, 313): in the advert for Olay Regenerist, the letters of the headline "Your skin isn't getting older. It's just tired." are formed by the pieces of a mirror, from which a solemn woman looks at the reader, presumably before using the product.

2.2.4 Different approaches

Although there are linguistic features that can be said to be "typical advertising English", different products are naturally advertised with different linguistic techniques, as the target groups of products vary. The traditional way has been to divide advertisements into two groups, hard-sell and soft-sell advertisements (O'Donnell and Todd 1991, 101; Cook 1992, 10).

The *hard-sell* advert is direct in its attempt to sell the product and it often uses bold typography to emphasise the message – these kinds of adverts are nowadays common in advertising groceries. The *soft-sell* adverts, on the other hand, try to appeal to the potential buyer's emotions. The techniques used are subtler, and the aim is to make the audience believe that they are not only buying a product, but also a better quality of life (O'Donnell and Todd 1991, 101-102). As O'Donnell and Todd (ibid., p. 102), and many more advertising scholars state, this is what most of today's advertisements aim at. In the abundance of products, it is harder to come up with valid reasons why one product is better than all the other, similar ones – it is the association that comes with that brand or product that counts (O'Donnell and Todd 1991, 102; Delin 2000, 126).

Thus, the amount in which typical features of advertising are found in advertisements varies according to the product and the target group, but there are always some features that can be said to be "typical Advertising English", no matter what the advertisement is for. Although cosmetics are most often advertised with the soft-sell technique – Schudson (1993; 64) explicitly calls cosmetics and perfume "emotional products" – one can still find examples of all the typical features laid out by Leech in 1966 in today's cosmetic advertisements.

3 Sense relations

In this chapter, the various kinds of sense relations will be discussed. Sense relations can be defined as semantic relations "between units of meaning" (Cruse 2011, 129). There are three main types of sense relations, namely paradigmatic, syntagmatic and derivational sense relations (ibid., p.131). Paradigmatic and syntagmatic sense relations are the object of interest in this study, while derivational sense relations will be left out as they are "only accidentally found between words forming part of a set of paradigmatic choices, and only accidentally contribute to cohesion" (ibid., p.133) – here, the focus is on relations that are consistently found in language, and accidental relations are thus not of interest. In addition to paradigmatic and syntagmatic relations, the sense relations homonymy and polysemy will be discussed. As was mentioned in the introduction, the use of sense relations in advertisements has not been studied extensively earlier, with the exception of homonymy and polysemy (see for example Myers 1994, Goddard 1998, Tanaka 1994).

In the field of semantics, there is often variation in the terminology used, and as concerns sense relations, the terms used for different types of synonymy and opposite relations differ among scholars. I will follow Cruse's (2011) terminology throughout the thesis. *Synonymy* is divided into three types: *absolute synonymy, propositional synonymy* and *near synonymy*. I use the term *opposites* as an umbrella term for all opposite relations, and the more specific types of opposites are referred to as *antonyms, complementaries* and *converses*. Some writers (e.g. Kearns 2006) use the term *antonymy* as an umbrella term for all opposite relations, and the term *contraries* is used for the opposite relations that I here refer to as *antonyms*.

3.1 Paradigmatic sense relations

Paradigmatic relations hold between items that can be placed on the same structural position when forming a sentence (Cruse 2011, 131). These items can be either in contrast or substitutable with each other (Palmer 1981, 67). From this it follows that paradigmatic relations are most often formed between words that belong to the same syntactic category (Cruse 2011, 131). Cruse (ibid., p. 134) divides paradigmatic sense relations into two different classes: relations expressing identity and inclusion, and relations that express opposition and exclusion. *Synonymy*, *hyponymy* and *meronymy* belong to the class of identity and inclusion while the various *types of opposites* form the class of opposition and exclusion.

3.1.1 Synonymy

Synonymy, in its widest sense, stands for "sameness of meaning" (Palmer 1981, 88). Synonyms can be categorized into three different types: absolute synonyms, propositional synonyms and near synonyms (Cruse 2011, 142). Two lexical items are *absolute synonyms* if and only if they are interchangeable and sound natural in all possible contexts (ibid.). This requirement is so strict that absolute synonyms are very rare, if not non-existent - Lyons (1981, 148) thinks that "absolute synonymy is probably restricted to highly specialized vocabulary that is purely descriptive." Jackson (1988, 66) adds that another reason for the rareness of absolute synonymy (in his terms *strict synonymy*) is simply economic: there is no need in a language for two words with exactly the same meaning.

The second type of synonymy, *propositional synonymy* (sometimes *cognitive synonymy*), holds between lexical items that can substitute one another in a sentence without changing the truth-conditional properties (Cruse 2011, 143; Kearns 2006, 559). In other words, the parallel sentences are mutually entailing (Cruse 2011, 143). According to Cruse (2011, 143, 201), the most important differences between propositional synonyms are in expressive meaning - that part of meaning that

reflects the speaker's attitude or emotion – stylistic level and the context in which they are normally used; Saeed (2009, 66) and Jackson (1988, 68) add also regional differences to the list. The differences between propositional synonyms are illustrated fairly well in the example pairs *infant – baby* and *go on – continue*, outlined by Cruse (1986, 277). With the pair *infant – baby*, one would expect to see the word *infant* used for example in medical discussions, while the word *baby* would more likely be heard in everyday conversation. As for the verbs, *go on* and *continue* have the same underlying meaning, but in a scientific context *go on* would seem inappropriate.

The third degree of synonymy is *near synonymy*. Near synonyms, sometimes called *plesionyms*, are words that have fuzzy boundaries between their meanings (Kearns 2006, 559). According to Cruse (2011, 145), "permissible differences between near synonyms must be either minor, or backgrounded, or both." An example of a minor difference is "adjacent position on scale of 'degree'", which can be illustrated with the pairs *fog – mist* and *big – huge* (ibid.); in both these pairs, one of the pair is "more" than the other, though the underlying meaning is the same. The adjective pair *pretty – handsome* is an example of a major backgrounded difference, where the propositional meaning of both words is 'good-looking', but *pretty* is used for women and *handsome* for men (ibid.). Thus, the gender distinction between the pair *man – woman* is so strong that the pair *pretty – handsome* is not synonymous despite the similarity in the underlying meaning.

3.1.2 Hyponymy

Hyponymy is an inclusive relation, where a *hyponym*, the more specific term, includes the meaning of the *hyperonym* (sometimes called the *superordinate*), the more general term (Saeed 2009, 69). Kearns (2000, 10) explains hyponymy as follows: "If A is a hyponym of B then an A is a kind of B." An example of hyponymy is the pair *apple – fruit*, where *apple* is the hyponym and *fruit* the hyperonym. Also other fruits, such as *banana* and *pear*, are hyponyms of *fruit*, which makes them *co-hyponyms* of *apple*. Hyponymy, as synonymy, is a relation involving entailment, but here the

entailment is unilateral, not mutual: 'It is an apple' entails 'It is a fruit', but not the other way around (Cruse 1986, 15).

Hyponymy exemplifies taxonomical classification in language (Kearns 2006, 562). Cruse (1986, 137) identifies *taxonomy* as a sense relation of its own, more precisely as "a sub-species of hyponymy". Here, however, this distinction is not made, and taxonomical relations are included in the class of hyponymy (Cruse 2011, 137).

The identification of hyperonyms and hyponyms can sometimes be difficult, as some hyponyms do not have a simple hyperonym or there is a gap in the lexicon (see quasi-relations, Section 3.1.5), and sometimes a word can simultaneously be both the hyponym and the hyperonym (Brinton and Brinton 2010, 152). An example of the latter case is the word *cow*, which can be used both as a hyperonym and as a hyponym with the more specific meaning 'female cow' (ibid.).

3.1.3 Meronymy

Meronymy is the linguistic equivalent of the part-whole relation (Cruse 2011, 137). Examples of meronymy are the pairs *hand – finger* and *car – engine* (ibid.). The item representing the whole is called *holonym*, and the item representing the part *meronym*. Thus, in the pair *hand – finger*, *hand* is the holonym and *finger* the meronym (ibid.).

Meronymy can be tested by using the frames "*X is a part of Y,* or *Y has X...*" (Saeed 2009, 70). The latter sentence, however, cannot be used as the only criterion for confirming meronymy, since the sentence works with non-meronymic pairs of nouns as well. Meronymy as a relation is less clear-cut than hyponymy, and there are differing opinions on what counts as meronymy and what does not. Cruse (2011, 138-139) offers necessity, integrality, discreteness, motivation and congruence as the features of a "good" meronymy. Congruence is further divided into three features: range, phase and type (ibid., pp.139-140). *Range* refers to the range of generality of the holonym and meronym, which most often is not identical (Cruse 2011, 139). *Phase* congruence

means that the part and the whole exist at the same time, while the third feature, *type*, refers to the fact that in a prototypical meronymy, the holonym and the meronym are "of the same ontological type" (ibid., p. 140) With the pair *finger – hand*, fingers are both necessary and integral parts of the hand, they can be moved independently (discreteness) and they have functional motivation (Cruse 2011, 138-139). As for congruence, the part *finger* and the whole *hand* are of the same ontological type and they exist at the same time (ibid., p. 140). It is therefore safe to say that the pair *finger – hand* is a good example of meronymy.

A group of words that also has its basis in part-whole relationships is *measures*. These are relationships between measure units, such as *minute – second* or *week – month* (Cruse 1986, 185-186). The fact that these measure units "increase geometrically" (ibid., p. 194) adds to the similarity between measures and meronymy: the evenly distributed measure units can well be thought as being parts of a whole. Also the relationships "member – collection" and "portion – mass" are in a way based on part-whole relationships, with examples such as *tree – forest* and *sheet of – paper*, respectively (Jaszczolt 2002, 13).

3.1.4 Types of opposites

Oppositeness differs from other sense relations in that it is recognized in everyday language: even small children can tell, for example, what the opposite of *big* is (Cruse 2011, 153). According to Cruse (ibid, pp. 153-154), oppositeness consists of three primary characteristics: binarity, inherentness and patency. While other sense relations may be formed of sets of more than two members, opposites are always binary. This binarity has to be inherent, not accidental: as an example of accidental binarity, Cruse (2011, 154) points out that single-deckers and double-deckers are not opposite, though they are the only two classes of buses. The third characteristic, patency, refers to the fact that directionality has to be a salient part of the meaning of two opposites (ibid.). As an example, he (ibid.) gives the pairs *Monday – Wednesday* and *yesterday – tomorrow*. In both

cases, there is a middle term to which the two terms are in opposite directions, *Tuesday* and *today* respectively, but only in the latter case the directionality is crucial for the meaning of the words (ibid.).

The class of opposites consists of four different sub-groups: complementaries, antonyms, reversives and converses. *Complementaries* are opposites where the two elements are mutually exclusive in some conceptual area: if one is A, one cannot be B, and if one is not A, it has to be B (Cruse 2011, 154-155). A pair of complementaries thus represents the only two possibilities of a particular state or action (Löbner 2002, 91). Examples of complementaries include *dead – alive, male - female* and *obey – disobey* (Cruse 2011, 154). As the examples show, complementary opposites can be adjectives or verbs (Cruse 1986, 201), and adjectival complementaries are always non-gradable (Löbner 2002, 91): a person cannot be **deader* or **alivest*.

Antonymy is the most frequent type of opposites, falling into three sub-groups: polar antonyms, equipollent antonyms and overlapping antonyms. The term *antonym* is often used as the umbrella term for all opposite relations, but is here used in the narrower sense following Cruse's (1986, 2011) terminology. *Polar antonyms* are all adjectival opposites such as *long – short*, *heavy – light* and *high – low* (Cruse 2011, 156). Polar antonyms are always fully gradable: they can be modified with degree modifiers such as *very* and *quite*, and they are used in the comparative and superlative forms (ibid.). Polar antonyms "indicate degrees of some objective, unidimensional physical property, prototypically one which can be measured in conventional units such as centimetres, kilograms, miles per hour" (ibid.). The two terms in a pair of polar antonyms represent the opposite ends of a scale, and there is always a distinct, neutral term which can be used to describe the physical property in question, such as *length* or *weight* (Kearns 2000, 8). The term which represents the "upper" end of the scale is the more neutral one: when asking the question *How X is it*, *How long is it?* can be asked when referring to objects of all lengths, but *How short is it?* presupposes that the object is actually short (ibid.). The comparative forms, *longer - shorter,* can

however each be used for both long and short objects, and these forms are called *pseudocomparatives* (ibid.).

Equipollent antonyms differ from polar antonyms in that there is no impartial term: for example, *How hot is it?* presupposes that the item in question is hot, and *How cold is it?* presupposes coldness (Cruse 2011, 157). These adjectives thus have true comparatives. Equipollent antonyms are all adjectives that denote sensations or emotions, such as *hot – cold, bitter – sweet* and *happy – sad* (ibid.). The third class, *overlapping antonyms*, can be exemplified with the pair *good – bad*, where the comparative of the positive member *good* is a pseudocomparative, and *bad* has a true comparative form (Kearns 2000, 9). *How good are you at math?* is a neutral question, whereas *How bad are you at math?* is committed and suggests "badness" (Cruse 2011, 157). As with the comparatives, Kearns (2000, 9) offers the following set of examples:

i. A and B are both rude, but A is more polite than B.
ii. A and B are both rude, but B is ruder than A.
iii. A and B are both polite, but A is more polite than B.
iv. #A and B are both polite, but B is ruder than A.

Thus, the pseudocomparative *more polite* has the meaning 'a greater degree of demeanor', whereas *ruder* means 'a greater degree of rudeness' and is thus a true comparative that can only be used when referring to rude people (Kearns 2000, 9). Other examples of overlapping antonyms are *kind – cruel, clever – dull* and *pretty – plain* (Cruse 2011, 157).

In addition to complementaries and antonyms, there is also a class of opposites denoting directional oppositeness (Cruse 2011, 160). With directional opposites, as the name suggests, "there is a point of reference from which one looks in opposite directions on a certain axis" (Löbner 2002, 90). *Reversives* and *converses* are two types of directional opposites. Reversives are all verbs that denote change in opposite directions, such as *rise – fall, enter – leave, tie – untie* and *dress – undress* (Cruse 2011, 160). Converses, on the other hand, "represent two (opposite) perspectives on

the same relation" (Jackson 1988, 76). An example of a converse pair is *below* - *above*: *A is below B* has the same meaning as *B is above A*. Converse pairs can be prepositions (*before* - *after*), verbs (*precede* - *follow*), nouns (*wife* - *husband*) or comparative adjectives (*longer* - *shorter*) (Kearns 2006, 561). However, as the pair *wife – husband* shows, not all converse pairs are explicitly directional (Cruse 2011, 161).

3.1.5 Quasi-relations

Within the field of paradigmatic sense relations, it is possible to come across situations where there are words that appear to be in a paradigmatic relationship, but this is not possible as they represent different syntactic categories (Cruse 1986, 97). The term for this phenomenon is *quasi-relation*.

As an example of quasi-relations Cruse (1986, 97) offers the color adjectives, which are quasi-hyponyms of the noun *color*, since there is no adjective that could work as a hyperonym for all the color adjectives. Lyons (1977, 299) gives another example with the adjectives *round, square* and *oblong* for which there is no adjective to stand as the hyperonym, but there is the noun *shape* that works as a quasi-hyperonym. Quasi-relations are the result of a gap in the lexicon (Lyons 1977, 300), and, as the examples show, quasi-hyponymy is the most common of quasi-relations.

3.2 Homonymy and polysemy

Homonymy and *polysemy* are discussed under the same heading since in both cases a similar spelling or sound form accounts for multiple meanings. The main difference is that homonymy is a relation between two different lexemes, whereas polysemy is a relation between the related senses of a single lexeme (Lyons 1981, 146). Both homonymy and polysemy constitute lexical ambiguity, as "the same lexical form has different lexical meanings." (Löbner 2002, 43)

Cruse (2011, 115) defines *homonyms* as "two different words which happen to have the same formal properties (phonological and graphic)." Homonymy is thus a rare and accidental phenomenon (Taylor 2003, 106-107). Jaszczolt (2002, 14-15) gives the following criteria for absolute homonyms: they have to "be unrelated in meaning", and "their identical forms have to be grammatically equivalent". A well-known example of a homonymous word is *bank* (ibid., p.15), which has two completely unrelated meanings: "an establishment for the custody of money received from, or on behalf of, its customers" (*OED* s.v. *bank n.*[3], sense 7a) and "a raised shelf or ridge of ground, etc." (*OED* s.v. *bank n.*[1], sense 1). Homonyms are sometimes divided into two groups, *homographs* and *homophones* (Löbner 2002, 43). Homographs are two words that have the same written form, but they are pronounced differently and have unrelated meanings, while homophones share the same sound form but differ in spelling and meaning (Jackson 1988, 4).

Polysemy, on the other hand, is concerned with the interrelated meanings of one and the same lexeme (Löbner 2002, 43). The lexeme *bank* also serves as an example of polysemy: a meaning related to *bank* as a financial institution is "a store of things for future use, a reserve supply" (*OED* s.v. *bank* n.[3], sense 7h), as in *blood bank*. Both banks are places for keeping and storing something, in this case money and blood, and it is clear that the meanings are interrelated.

It is not always easy to decide whether or not two meanings of a single word are related or completely different. Etymology is one of the most used criteria for distinguishing polysemy and homonymy: if the two words are known to have unrelated historical origins, they are treated as homonyms (Palmer 1981, 102). However, Palmer (ibid.) notes that "the history of language does not always reflect actually its present state". Another test is to look for synonyms of the words in question: if the two senses have completely different synonyms, they are homonyms (Cruse 1986, 55). The dictionary entries also give some insight into this problem: homonyms have their own entries in dictionaries, while the senses of a polysemous word are explained under the same entry.

Changing the sense of a homonymous or a polysemous word within a sentence results in a *zeugma* (Cruse 2011, 102). Taylor (2003, 104) defines zeugma as "a figure of speech whereby two distinct senses of a word are incongruously 'yoked' together in a single construction." An example offered by Cruse (2006, 192-193) is the sentence 'She was wearing a charming smile and a pair of slippers', where the zeugma is in the verb *to wear.* A zeugma thus breaks the rules of the *identity constraint* of polysemous words. The identity constraint means that in a single sentence, after one has decided which meaning of a polysemous word has been used, one cannot switch to another meaning within that same sentence (Cruse 2011, 102). In the example sentence above, two different senses of *to wear* are needed for the sentence to make sense.

3.3 Syntagmatic sense relations

While the members of a paradigmatic sense relation can be used in the same structure point of a sentence, *syntagmatic sense relations* "hold between items which occur in the same sentence" (Cruse 2011, 132). All the elements of a sentence contribute to which words can or cannot occur together. As an example Cruse (ibid., p. 133) gives the sentence *John drank a glass of* ---; in order for the sentence to make sense, it has to be completed with something drinkable. Syntagmatic sense relations are thus "an expression of coherence constraints" (ibid.)."

Syntagmatic sense relations become interesting in situations where these coherence constraints are violated. Words can have selectional or collocational restrictions. *Selectional restrictions* are "semantic co-occurrence restrictions which are logically necessary" (Cruse 1986, 278). For example, in order to use the verb *give birth* one has to have a subject which is animate and female. Especially verbs and adjectives have selectional restrictions regarding which nouns they can be used with (Brinton and Brinton 2010, 175). Brinton and Brinton (ibid., p. 176) point out that selectional restrictions are often violated in figurative uses of language, and this is also the case in

advertising language. Words can also have *collocational restrictions*. These differ from selectional restrictions in that they are arbitrary (Cruse 1986, 279). For example, Cruse (ibid.) notes that the verb *kick the bucket* is used only with human subjects, but this restriction does not arise from logical necessity: as the propositional meaning of *kick the bucket* is *die,* the expression could logically be used for other than human subjects as well.

Cruse (2006, 164) notes that syntagmatic sense relations are not named in the same ways as paradigmatic sense relations, but that some effects of meaning creating abnormality are recognized. The umbrella term for these effects is *semantic anomaly* (Murphy and Koskela 2010, 15), meaning that although an expression is grammatically correct, the meaning is abnormal or nonsensical. If selectional or collocations restrictions are violated, there is a *semantic clash* (Cruse 2011, 186). There are three degrees of semantic clash: inappropriateness, paradox and incongruity (ibid., pp. 186-187). The verbs *kick the bucket* and *die* exemplify *inappropriateness*, as the violation of collocational restrictions does not affect the logicality of the sentence (Cruse 2011, 186). *Paradox*, on the other hand, can be exemplified with the expressions 'Rain falls upwards, usually' and 'The cat barked' (ibid., p.187); here, the selectional restrictions are violated. *Incongruity* is the strongest clash, where "the ontological discrepancy is so large that no sense can be extracted at all, without radical reinterpretation." (Cruse 2011, 187). An example offered by Cruse (ibid.) is *purple gestures of rat milk*, which does not make sense if interpreted literally.

Another type of abnormality in syntagmatic sense relations is called *pleonasm* (Cruse 2011, 187). An example of pleonasm is the expression *a royal king* (Murphy and Koskela 2010, 121); here, the addition of *royal* is redundant, as the meaning is already a part of the meaning of the word *king*. Thus, a pleonastic relation holds between two elements "when one of them seems redundant, and appears not to add any semantic information not already given by the other element." (Cruse 2011, 187)

4 Materials and methods

This chapter focuses on the data and the method of analysis used in this thesis. The advertisements studied and the reasons for choosing this data are discussed in Section 4.1, while Section 4.2 focuses on the methods employed in this study.

4.1 Materials studied

The data of this study consists of cosmetics advertisements that were collected from the following women's magazines: *British Vogue* July 1990 (*BV*1990), *Elle UK* August 1990 (*EUK*1990), *Glamour* September 1990 (*G*1990), *In Style* September 2013 (*ISS*2013), *In Style* November 2013 (*ISN*2013) and *In Style Beauty* Fall 2013 (*ISB*2013). The amount of cosmetics advertisements analyzed is 204 advertisements, of which 75 are from the magazines from 1990 and 129 from the magazines from 2013. The data includes all advertisements for makeup products, hair products and skincare products (moisturizers, washes, deodorants etc.) found in the magazines, with the exception of identical adverts that appeared more than once in different magazines, which were only taken into account once. I believe that the data is large enough to get a general picture of cosmetics advertisements in 1990 and in 2013. I acknowledge the fact that as there are fewer advertisements from 1990, the comparison is not completely equal. At the same time, the amount of advertisements in magazines has grown enormously in the past 25 years, and with having the same amount of magazines from both years I think some generalizations can be made.

The magazines from 1990 were chosen based on their availability: I chose the three magazines that I was able to access. The magazines from 2013, on the other hand, were chosen on the basis that *In Style* is the second largest magazine in the United States as regards pages dedicated to advertising, and the largest of women's magazines in this respect (Advertising Age Marketing

Fact Pack 2014, 23). More specifically, *In Style* September 2013 was chosen as one of the magazines because of the common practice of "September Issue" in the fashion industry, when all the magazines are filled with advertisements at the beginning of a new season (The Magazine Media Factbook 2013/2014, 18). *In Style Beauty* Fall 2013 is a special edition magazine which focuses primarily on beauty tips, which made it a good addition as all the advertisements in this magazine are for cosmetics products.

There were multiple reasons to focus on print advertisements. In order to analyze change I needed data from two different periods of time, and it was easier to find printed advertisements than, for example, television advertisements from 1990. As I wanted to study advertisements for a particular product segment, that is, cosmetics for women, the magazine as a specialized medium was an obvious choice. According to the Magazine Media Factbook 2013/2014, magazines are also the media in which people find advertising to be most engaging, inspirational, attention catching and acceptable (2013, 13-16).

There were also many reasons to focus on cosmetics advertisements. Cosmetics industry is one of the largest advertisers in the world: according to Advertising Age Marketing Fact Pack 2014 (2014, 9), in 2012, the three largest global advertisers were Procter & Gamble Co., Unilever and L'Oréal, all of which have cosmetics products in their brand array. Among the brands owned by Procter & Gamble Co. are such cosmetics firms as Olay, CoverGirl and Max Factor (http://www.pg.com/en_US/index.shtml), Dove and TRESemmé are Unilever brands (http://www.unilever.com/), and L'Oréal hosts both market cosmetics, such as Maybelline New York and L'Oréal Paris, as well as more luxurious brands such as Yves Saint Laurent and Lancôme (http://www.loreal.com/Default.aspx).

Even more important when doing a linguistic analysis is the fact that, in comparison with other advertising found in women's magazines, cosmetics advertisements tend to have substantially

more text in them. Although pictures are often thought to be more important than words (Myers 1994, 135; Johnson 2008, 3) most pictures found in cosmetics advertisements are of one of the two main types: a close-up of a women's face, or a picture of the advertised product. This similarity between pictures makes the text a differentiating factor between advertisements.

4.2 Methods employed

The method chosen for this study is a combination of linguistic and semantic analysis, as sense relations are part of the field of lexical semantics. The data, 204 cosmetics advertisements, was analyzed by going through the adverts and searching for the following linguistic features: paradigmatic and syntagmatic sense relations, homonymy and polysemy, alliteration and parallelism, and scientific and technological vocabulary. Each advert was looked through multiple times and in great detail, to make sure that all instances were found. The occurrences of the linguistic features found in the advertisements were collected in tables. The Oxford English Dictionary (hereafter *OED*) was used to help determine synonyms, as well as to illustrate the different meanings between the relations of polysemy and homonymy. The differences in the adverts from 1990 and 2013 as regards these particular features were then discussed to find out how and the language of cosmetics advertisements had changed. Here, the focus was broadened from individual words and structures to the entire advertisements and the data as a whole.

The research questions, as laid out in the introduction, were:

1. How are sense relations used in cosmetics advertisements?
2. How is scientific and technological vocabulary used in cosmetics advertisements?
3. How are alliteration and parallelism used in cosmetics advertisements?
4. Based on the use of these linguistic items, how has the language of cosmetics advertisements changed from 1990 to 2013?

To answer these questions, the adverts from 1990 and from 2013 were compared with one another throughout the analysis. The differences between individual magazines representing the same year will not be discussed, because, as mentioned in Section 4.1, there were advertisements that appeared in more than one magazine. As these adverts were only taken into account once, the percentages concerning individual magazines would not be accurate. However, in the analysis, the magazine from which a particular advert comes from is announced, for the sake of clarity and possible re-examination of the data.

In order to answer research questions 1-3, a linguistic analysis was conducted. The instances of linguistic features found in the advertisements were categorized in two different ways. First, the adverts with a particular linguistic feature were categorized on the basis of which *product* was advertised. Three categories were formed: skincare products, makeup products and hair products. Skincare products for the face and body were labeled in the same category to make the amount of advertisements representing one category as equal as possible. With each linguistic feature, the amount of adverts for a particular product category that had used the particular linguistic feature was divided with the amount of all adverts for that product category.

The second way to categorize the adverts was to study the *purpose* the linguistic item was used for – here, the meanings conveyed by the linguistic features were studied, corresponding to the semantic aspect of the analysis. There were four categories here, based on what the linguistic item was describing: the product, the effects of the product, the (potential) user of the product, or something else (labeled "other"). The first three categories were selected as in the analysis these types of usages stood out as common, and the fourth category was used for those instances that did not fit the three main categories. In this part of the analysis, the linguistic features were examined in a larger context, that is, the entire text of the advertisement was taken into account. In the following chapter, the results of these categorizations are presented with the help of figures. Research question

four will be answered more thoroughly in Chapter 6 where the more specific results are discussed from a broader perspective.

The analysis of the sense relations homonymy and polysemy, as well as syntagmatic relations was conducted in a slightly different manner for two reasons. First, the nature of the relations homonymy and polysemy does not allow for analyzing the purpose in the same way, as the different meanings of the word can account for different purposes. Second, figures are not used in the analysis of these three sense relations, as they were used quite scarcely in the advertisements and the use of figures with columns would be somewhat misleading as the amount of instances is so small.

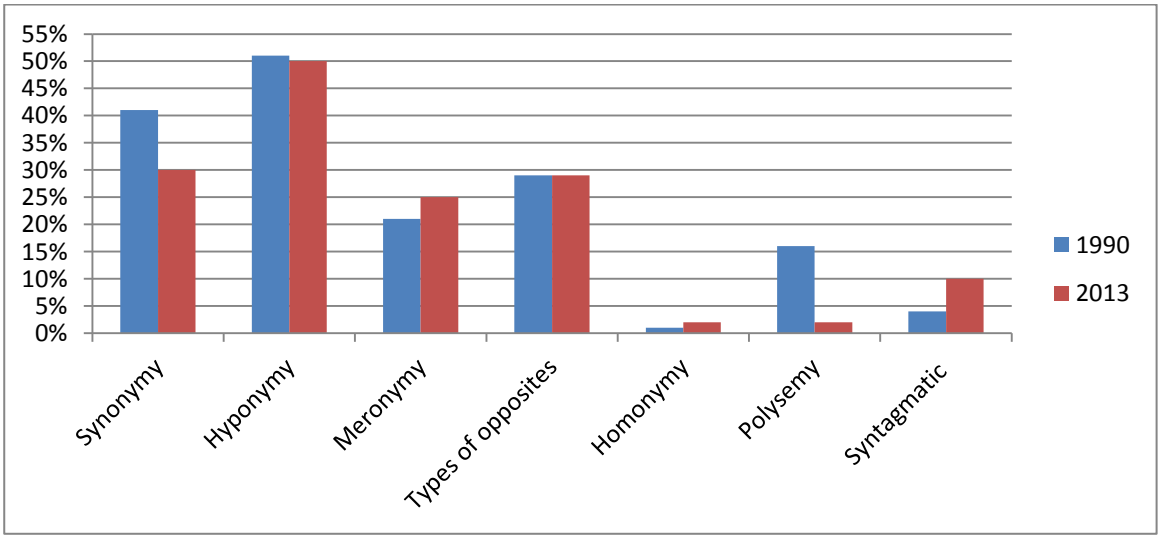
5 Analysis and findings

In this chapter, the data will be analyzed in the way described in Section 4.2, with the help of statistics and examples. First, the particular linguistic items will be looked at in detail, and the changes in the language in a larger scale will be discussed in Chapter 6. The percentages are rounded to the nearest whole percent, which in some tables illustrating the purpose for which a particular linguistic item is used results in percentages adding up to 99% or 101%.

5.1 The use of sense relations

Paradigmatic sense relations were used in 75% of the adverts from 1990 (56 of 75 adverts) and in 76% of the 2013 adverts (98 of 129 adverts). Homonymy was very rare both years, while polysemy was far more common in 1990 than in 2013 (16% versus 2%). Syntagmatic sense relations were not common: in the 1990 adverts, only 3 of the 75 adverts studied had unusual syntagmatic sense relations (4%), and in 2013 the percentage was 10% (13 of 129 adverts). Figure 1 illustrates the percentage of adverts in which a particular sense relation was found.

Figure 1. The use of sense relations in the data



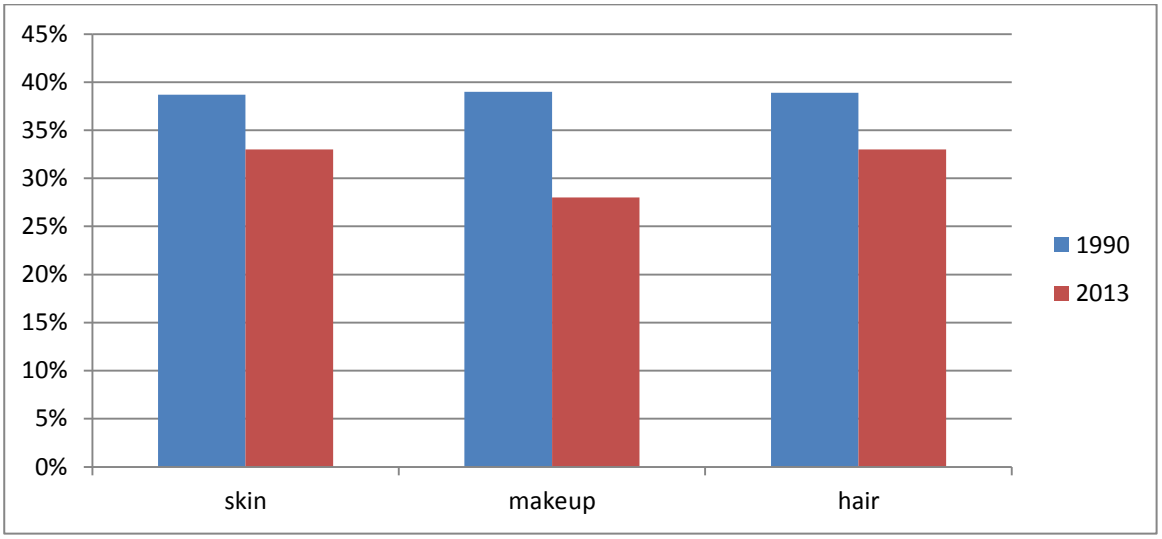
Overall, 58 of the 75 adverts from 1990 had used one or more sense relation in their copy (77%), and in 2013, 100 of the 129 adverts had employed sense relations (78%). As a whole, sense relations had been used in 158 of the entire data of 204 adverts, which as percentages is 77%.

As was explained in Chapter 4, the paradigmatic sense relations were analyzed on the basis of two categories: (1) which product was advertised, and (2) what did the sense relation describe: the product, its effects, the (potential) user of the product, or something else. As mentioned earlier, homonymy, polysemy and syntagmatic sense relations were analyzed differently due to their different nature and the smaller amount of instances. The use of sense relations will be discussed in their separate sections.

5.1.1 Synonymy

Synonymy was used in 41% of the adverts from 1990 (31 of 75 adverts) and in 30% of the adverts from 2013 (39 of 129 adverts). No examples of true synonyms were found, but there were examples of both propositional and near synonyms.

Figure 2. The use of synonymy in advertising different product groups



As can be seen from Figure 2, there are some differences between 1990 and 2013: in 1990, synonymy was equally common in all product groups (circa 39%), while in 2013 the two most common groups were skincare products and hair products.

Starting with the adverts from 1990, hair product advertisements included synonymous verbs such as *sculpt – shape* (John Paul Mitchell Systems and Condition by Clairol, *G*1990), *assure-ensure* (Nexxus Ensure, *G*1990) and *penetrate – enter* (Wella Balsam Hair Restructurant, *EUK*1990). Of these, the pair *sculpt – shape* is an example of near synonyms, while both *assure – ensure* and *penetrate – enter* are propositional synonyms, as is illustrated by their definitions:

> To make certain the occurrence or arrival of (an event); to ensure. (*OED* s.v *assure v.*, sense 5)
>
> To make certain the occurrence or arrival of (an event), or the attainment of (a result); =ASSURE *v.* 5." (*OED* s.v. *ensure v.*, sense 8)
>
> *trans*. To get into or through, gain entrance or access to, esp. with force, effort, or difficulty; to pierce. Also in extended use: to bring light into or see through (darkness, fog, something opaque, etc.). (*OED* s.v *penetrate v.*, sense 1a)
>
> To go or come in. (*OED* s.v. *enter v.*, sense I)

Both these pairs are interchangeable in all contexts as concerns truth-conditions, and with the verbs *penetrate – enter* the difference is in style, with *enter* being the more commonplace verb (Cruse 2011, 143).

Also makeup advertisements in 1990 used synonyms quite extensively. Revlon's Velvety Touch Lipstick (*G*1990) has "a sumptuous, velvety feel" and it comes in the shade "Plush Red", while Maybelline No Problem Mascara (*G*1990) promises to leave "No clumps. No globs. No smears. No smudges." Of these the pairs *plush – sumptuous* and *clumps – globs* are near synonyms, while the pair *smear – smudge* exemplifies propositional synonymy:

> A mark, smudge, or stain made by smearing, or suggestive of this; a layer or patch of some substance applied by smearing. (*OED* s.v *smear n*., sense 3a)
>
> A dirty mark or stain, esp. such as is caused by a smear or by trying to rub out a previous mark. (*OED* s.v *smudge n.*[1], sense 1a)

Skincare products were advertised with the help of such synonyms as *gentle – mild* (Vichy Light Cream with Elastin, *EUK*1990) and *specialist – expert* (Neutrogena Moisture SPF 15 Formula, *G*1990).

In advertising both hair products and skincare products in 2013, four near synonymous adjectives occurred multiple times: *smooth, soft, silky* and *sleek.* For example, L'Oréal Paris Color Vibrancy (*ISN*2013) "nourishes hair to silky and soft", L'Oréal Paris Smooth Intense (*ISN*2013) "polishes hair to perfectly sleek", and with Jergens Daily Moisture (*ISS*2013) you get "silky, smooth skin". As there are contexts where truth-conditions would be affected with the change of word, but the differences in meaning are only minor, these are labelled as near synonyms (Cruse 2011, 144-145). These synonymous pairs were also found in adverts from 1990: Fenjal Creme Bath (*BV*1990) promises to leave skin "soft, supple and sensuously smooth", while with Maybelline Satin Complexion Pressed Powder (*G*1990) one can achieve the "smoothest, softest finish imaginable".

A good example of the use of synonyms in 2013 is the advert for Olay Pro-X Microdermabrasion System (*ISS*2013) which was filled with synonyms: it included the nominal synonyms *fall – autumn, fragrance – perfume* and *hue – tone*, as well as the synonymous verb pairs *reveal – uncover* and *rejuvenate -revitalize*. The pairs *fall – autumn* and *fragrance – perfume* are clear examples of propositional synonyms, as the differences are in the register (Saeed 2009, 66: Cruse 2011, 143): *fall* is American English and *autumn* British English, whereas *fragrance* is a more sophisticated word than *perfume*. The verbal synonyms, on the other hand, are near synonyms.

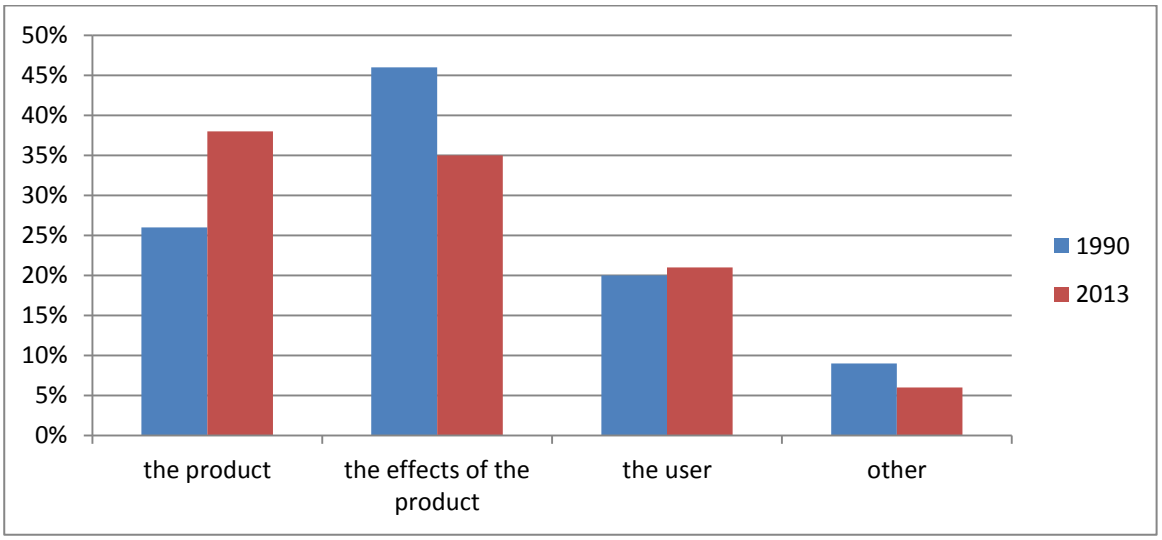
As for the pair *hue – tone*, it was also used in other advertisements, accompanied by the noun *shade*. Sephora IQ has a six-page advert in *In Style* September 2013, where different types of foundations are promoted: "Discover your perfect shade with The Naturals", "Find your exact hue with The Radiants", "Meet your precise tone with The Naturals". *Tone* is near synonymous with

both *hue* and *shade*, which in turn are propositional synonyms. This is further illustrated by the advertisement for Almay Pure Confection -makeup collection (*BV*1990), where the colors of the various makeup products are described as "fresh shades" and "honeycomb hues." Here, the two nouns are used in the following senses:

> Degree of darkness or depth of colour; hence, any of the many minutely differing varieties of quality that may exist in what is broadly considered as one and the same colour; a tint." (*OED* s.v *shade n.*, sense 4a)
>
> *Chromatics.* Variety of any colour, caused by approach to or slight admixture of another; tint or quality of a particular colour." (*OED* s.v *hue n.*[1], sense 3b)

This is an example propositional synonymy, since the two nouns are interchangeable in the sense that the truth-conditions remain the same (Kearns 2006, 559).

Figure 3. The purpose for using synonymy.



When analyzing the purpose the synonyms were used for, there were some differences between 1990 and 2013 (see Figure 3). In 1990 synonymy was most commonly employed in describing the effects of the product, while in 2013 it was used most often to describe the product itself. Both years, a common way to describe the effects was to use verbs with a transformative meaning. L'Oréal Plénitude Active Daily Moisturizer (*G*1990) "protects against environmental extremes", and by using the product you can "defend your skin every day against the signs of

aging". Piz Buin Sun Allergy Lotion (*EUK*1990) "helps calm and soothe irritated skin", Garnier Triple Nutrition Fortifying Conditioner (*ISS*2013) "mends, strengthens & restores", while Clarisonic Deep Pore Detoxifying Solution (*ISS*2013) promises to "remove impurities" as it "rids the pores of damaging, pore-clogging toxins". The pairs *protect – defend, calm – soothe, mend – restore* and *rid – remove* are all near synonyms with fuzzy boundaries between their meanings (Kearns 2006, 559).

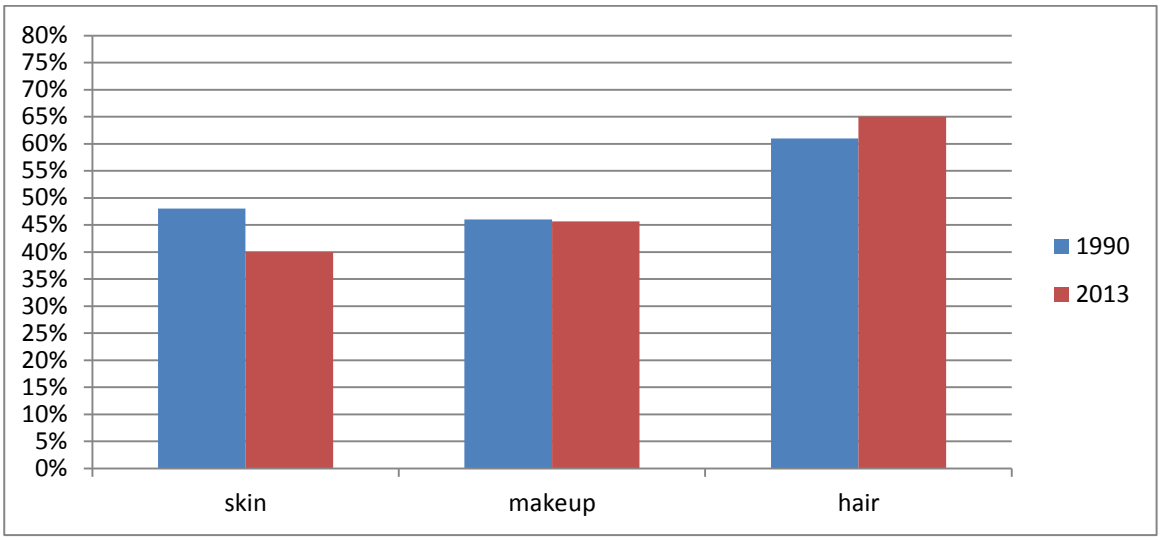
Most of the synonyms used to describe the product were alternative names to the product advertised. Examples include *spritz (n) – spray (n)* (Condition by Clairol –hair products, *G*1990), *gloss - shine* (Burt's Bees Lipgloss, *ISS*2013 and Toni & Guy Shine Gloss Serum, *ISB*2013), *anti-perspirant – deodorant* (Dove ClearTone anti-perspirant, *ISS*2013) and *cleanser – wash* (Clearasil Daily Clear Refreshing Superfruit Wash, *ISS*2013). The main motivation for using synonymy in this way is to bring variation to the language of the advertisement, as these near synonyms do not offer any additional information about the products. There were also cases in which propositional synonyms were used merely to make the vocabulary more diverse. Interestingly, the advert for Olay Regenerist Micro-Sculpting Cream (*ISS*2013) states that "You're skin isn't getting older" but tells also what happens "as skin ages", while the Twitter-account for Zoya –nail polishes (*ISS*2013*)* is @ZOYANAILPOLISH, but in the bottle the product is called "professional lacquer". With the pairs *get older – age* and *polish* – lacquer, the differences are in register and style, which makes them propositional synonyms (Cruse 2011, 143).

To sum up, synonymy was used fairly evenly in advertising all product groups. The purpose for using synonymy was most often to describe either the product (2013) or its promised effects (1990). Examples of these were references to the shades of the product, referring to the product with two different nouns to make the language of the advertisement more vivid, and describing the effects with the help of verbs with transformative meanings.

5.1.2 Hyponymy

Hyponymy was the most frequently used sense relation both in the adverts from 1990 (38 of 75 adverts, 51%) and from 2013 (65 of 129 adverts, 50%). Especially hair products were advertised with hyponymy (Figure 4). Hyponymy was more common in skincare adverts in 1990 than in 2013, while the amount of hyponymy found in makeup adverts was fairly equal between 1990 and 2013.

Figure 4. The use of hyponymy in advertising different product groups



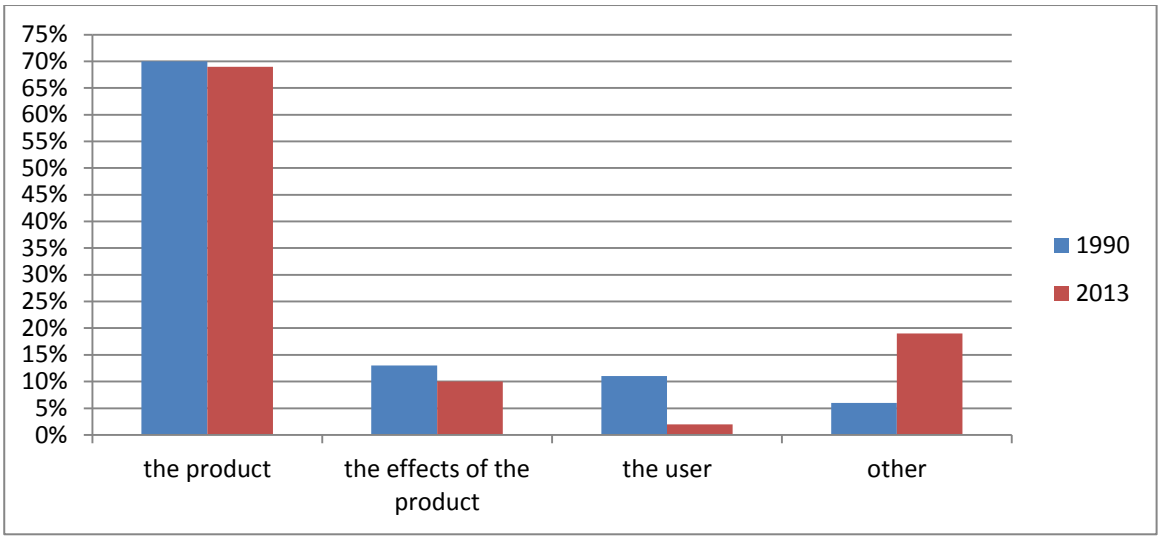
The most typical way of using hyponyms was to list the various products of a certain range. The co-hyponyms *shampoo – conditioner* occurred in 20 different advertisements, and they were often accompanied by other hair products such as *shine mask – styling oil* (Suave Professionals Moroccan Infusion, *ISN*2013), *elixir – blow dry spray* (NEXXUS Youth Renewal, *ISS*2013) *repair – mask* (*ISB*2013), *cleanser – sealer* (Motions 3-Step Heat Styled System, *ISB*2013) and *gel – spritz* (Ginza, *G*1990). In all of these cases, the hyperonym is "hair product". Hyponymy was used in the same way also in advertising products for the skin: *sun lotion – after-sun care – sun filter gel* (RoC Active Sun Protection –range, *EUK*1990), *bath oil – soap* (Caress Body Bar, *G*1990), and *cleanser – moisturizer* (Aveeno Clear Complexion –skincare collection, *ISS*2013) are just a few examples. Also makeup adverts employed this type of hyponymy, although here the hyponymy is in fact quasi-hyponymy (Cruse 1986, 97), as the hyperonym "makeup" is an uncountable noun and the various types of products are countable nouns. Examples include *foundation – lipstick – eye shadow*

– *blush* (Damascar Cosmetic Line, *G*1990), *foundation – powder* (Maybelline Fit Me Shine-Free Foundation, *ISS*2013), *eyeliner – kajal* (L'Oréal Voluminous Smoldering Eyeliner, *ISS*2013) and *primer – shadow* (Revlon Photoready Primer, Shadow + Sparkle, *ISN*2013).

Another common type of quasi-hyponymy used in the cosmetics advertisements were the various color adjectives, which were used in advertisements for hair colors, nail polishes and makeup products. In this case, the quasi-hyperonym *color* is from another syntactic category than the hyponyms (Cruse 1986, 97). For example, Damascar (*G*1990) has different foundations to "correct yellow & green tones" and to "correct red tones", while Maybelline Moisture Whip Lipcolor (*G*1990) comes in "a treasure of brilliant lipcolors: precious reds, corals, pinks." The advert for Maybelline Colorsensational Lipcolor (*ISS*2013) has slightly more innovative color terms than its earlier counterpart: "Now plums burst with ripeness – Supremely sensual violets, smoother wines…sensational." There were also other more interesting colors in the 2013 advertisements: for example, Maybelline Color Tattoo Pure Pigments Up To 24HR Shadow (*ISS*2013 and *ISN*2013) comes in shades such as "Wild Gold", "Potent Purple", "Never Fade Jade", "Downtown Brown", "Pink Rebel" and "Black Mystery", Revlon Nail Enamel –nail polishes (*ISN*2013) are a "curated collection of shades that mix soft pinks and lilacs with edgy navy and black sequins", and the advert for Olay Pro-X Microdermabrasion System (*ISS*2013) encourages the reader to "try the latest trends, like plum eye shadows, burgundy lips, and jade nails."

The use of hyponyms differed greatly from the use of synonymy (Section 5.1.1), as hyponymy was by far most frequently employed in describing the actual products, and it was used very little in describing the effects of the product (see Figure 5, page 43). In addition to the two ways discussed earlier, that is, listing the different products that belong to the same collection or announcing the various shades, the ingredients of the products were often laid out: *ginseng* and *turmeric* are hyponyms of *herb* (Aveda invati -hair products, *ISS*2013), and Garnier Nutrisse Nourishing Color Crème includes "3 nourishing fruit oils – avocado, olive & shea" (*ISN*2013).

Figure 5. The purpose for using hyponymy



More creative use of hyponymy was found in the advertisement for Essie Winter Collection 2013 nail polishes (*ISN*2013), which had names such as "parka perfect" and "warm & toasty turtleneck", where *parka* and *turtleneck* are both hyponyms of *garment*. Also the advertisement for Almay Pure Confection –makeup products (*BV*1990) included some innovative sets of hyponymous words, as the description of "Summer Eyes" illustrates:

> Eyes are ice-cream cool in candyfloss and pure peppermint. Or good as gold in toffee and honeycomb hues. Lashes are back with a mere sweep of liquorice or fudge.

Ice-cream and *candyfloss* are both hyponyms of *treat*s, while *peppermint, toffee, liquorice* and *fudge* are all types of *candy*. A rather curious finding was the use of hyponymous sets of fabrics. Cover Girl Soft Radiants Eye Shadow (*G*1990) has "Chiffon-sheer color" that "slides on like silk", Maybelline Satin Complexion Pressed Powder (*G*1990) is "Smooth as Satin. Soft as Silk", and Zoya's (*ISS*2013) Fall 2013 nail polish collections are called "Cashmeres & Satins. The pairs *chiffon – silk, satin – silk* and *cashmere – satin* were all used to describe the soft texture of the advertised product.

As Figure 5 above shows, the reasons for using hyponymy were fairly similar in 1990 and 2013, although in 2013 there were quite a few cases that were labeled under the category "other"

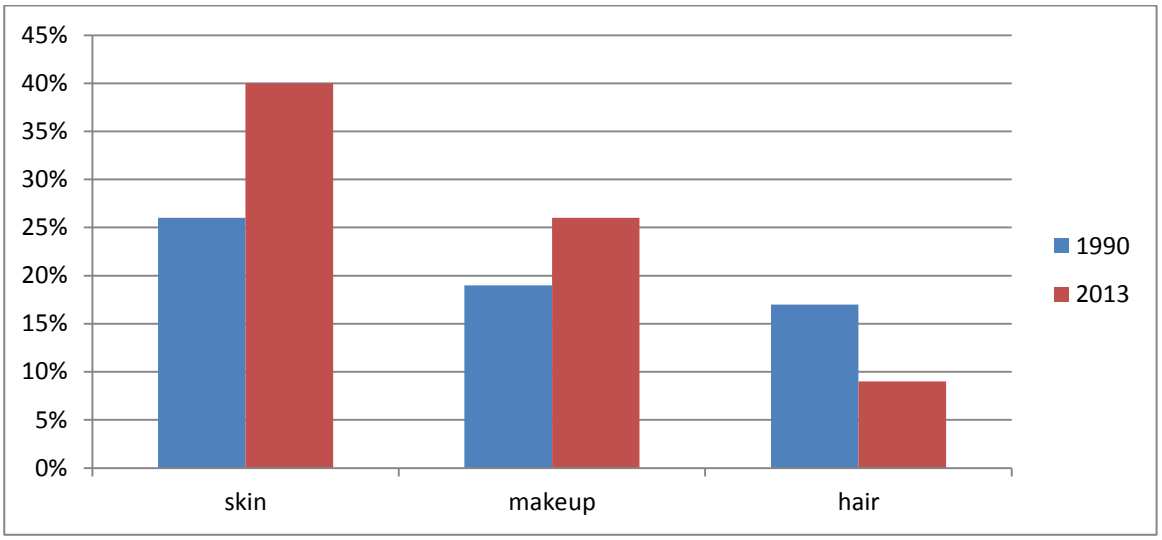
and on the other hand, hyponymy was used more often in 1990 to describe the user of the product. Most of the cases labeled under "other" in 2013 were occupations such as *actress – actor - make-up-artist – scientist* (SK-II Facial Treatment Essence, *ISS*2013), *stylist – designer* (TRESemmé Platinum Strength Heat Protect Spray, *ISB*2013), *makeup artist – nutritionist – dermatologist – fitness expert – psychiatrist* (Simple –skincare products, *ISS*2013) and *stylist – blogger – beauty editor* (Suave Professionals Moroccan Infusion, *ISN*2013). These were used to give authority to the product, with a range of different people commenting on its superiority. An example of hyponyms describing the user in 1990 comes from the advert for Bergasol –tanning products (*EUK*1990), which promotes tanning products designed specifically for the *four basic skin types – ultra sensitive, fair, normal* and *dark*.

All in all, hyponymy was most often found in hair product adverts, and the most typical ways to use hyponymy were to list the different products of a range or to tell about the shades of the product. The clear majority of hyponyms were used to describe the product, which differs from the use of synonymy discussed earlier. The most notable difference between 1990 and 2013 were that the color adjectives used in 2013 were much more vivid and innovative compared to those in 1990, and that in 2013, there were many hyponymous sets of occupations that were used to emphasize the authority behind the product.

5.1.3 Meronymy

Meronymy was used in approximately every fifth of the advertisements from 1990 (16 of 75 adverts, 21%), and in every fourth advertisement from 2013 (32 of 129 adverts, 25%). Both years, meronymy was most common in advertisements for skin products, and hair products were advertised more often with the help of meronymy in 1990 than in 2013 (see Figure 6, page 44).

Figure 6. The use of meronymy in advertising different product groups

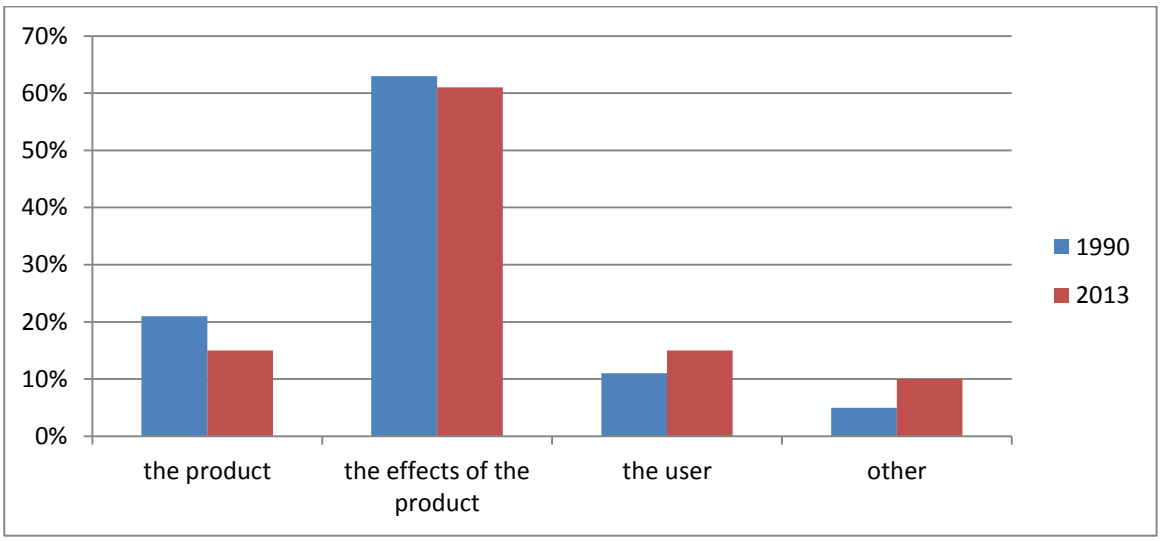


Most adverts for skincare products for the face had the noun *skin* as the holonym, and the meronyms varied according to the product. In advertising more prestigious products there were such examples as *intercellular tissue* (Helena Rubinstein Intercell Anti-Time Principle) and *epidermis* (Chanel Hydra-Système and Evian Mist Spray), all from *British Vogue* July 1990. More common were meronyms such as *layers, wrinkles, lines* and *pores*: for example, Olay Pro-X Microdermabrasion System (*ISS*2013) urges the reader to "get back the smooth, vibrant skin hiding underneath life's layers", Lancôme Visionnaire Advanced Skin Corrector (*ISN*2013) "Visibly corrects wrinkles, pores, unevenness", and Clarins Double Serum Complete Age Control Concentrate (*ISS*2013) promises "87% Firmer skin, 79% Reduced wrinkles, 88% More even skin tone, 88% Less visible pores."

The examples of meronymy in skincare advertisements are not of the best possible kind (Cruse 2011, 138-140): although most of them are integral and necessary parts of the skin, they cannot be moved independently from the whole and there is no clear "line" between the part and the whole. Better meronymies were found in advertisements for mascara: Lancôme Keracils –mascara (*G*1990) has a "patent pending 'lash divider brush'", CoverGirl Flamed Out Mascara's "Volume Igniter Brush flames each lash up and out for red-hot volume", and Revlon Lash Potion Mascara

(both *ISS*2013) has a "triple-groove wand for clump-free length." Here, *mascara* is the holonym and *brush* and *wand* the meronyms. There is a reason for focusing the reader's attention to the brush of the mascara, namely that it is the shape of the brush in which mascaras differ from each other the most. Many mascara adverts also included the pair *eye – lashes*, and *eye* was also a holonym for *lid* in the adverts for philosophy full of promise eye duo and Maybelline Color Tattoo Pure Pigments Up To 24HR Shadow (both *ISS*2013).

Figure 7. The purpose for using meronymy



Meronymy was used quite similarly in 1990 and 2013 (Figure 7). "The effects of the product" was clearly the largest category, and besides the way in which the product affects the skin and its imperfections discussed earlier, many effects of hair products were advertised with references to the different parts of hair. Wella Balsam Hair Restructurant (*EUK*1990) "penetrates the hair, enters the cortex and strengthens the hair bonds", L'Oréal Paris Triple Resist -shampoo (*ISS*2013) "nourishes root to core to tip", and the Densiplex™ found in Aveda invati –hair products (*ISS*2013) "helps energize and rehabilitate the scalp around the follicles when massaged in." *Cortex, hair bond, root, core, tip* and *follicle* are all meronyms with the holonym *strand of hair*.

The effects of the product -category contained also many measures, illustrating either the fast and easy use of the product or its long-lasting effects. Coty's Nature's Blush "creates a soft tint of

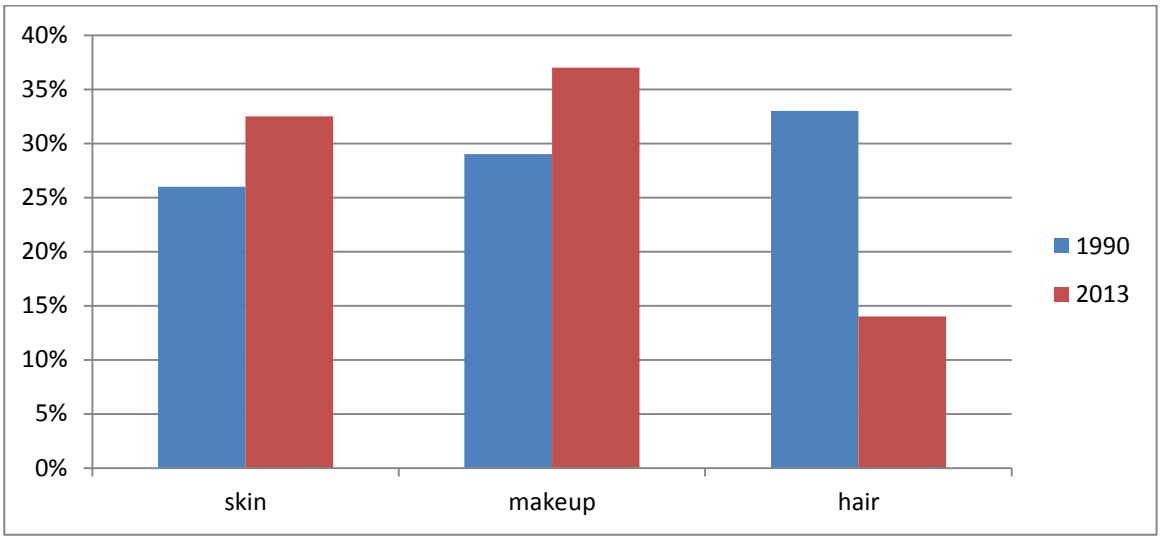
natural looking color in just seconds", while their "Totally Transparent T-Zone Control Pressed Powder holds back shine for hours" (*G*1990). Lancôme Teint Visionnaire Skin Correcting Makeup Duo (*ISN*2013) promises to "visibly improve pores and fine lines day after day" and to "transform your skin in 4 weeks". The pairs *second – hour* and *week – day* are examples of measures, in the first pair the measure unit *minutes* in the middle has been left out (Cruse 1986, 185-186). There were also more innovative ways of using meronymy. Clé de Peau Beauté Extra Rich Lipstick (*ISS*2013) is advertised with the help of botanical words: "As stirring as a rose in bloom. As seductively soft as a perfect petal." Here, *rose – petal* is a meronymic pair. "Lips, nails and cheeks are sugarspun perfection" with the use of Almay Pure Confection –makeup collection (*BV*1990), with *lips* and *cheeks* being meronyms of *face.*

Thus, meronymy was most common in advertising skincare products, although "better" meronymies were found in both hair and makeup product advertisements. The majority of meronymies found in the data were used to illustrate the effects of the product, and these effects varied from referencing to the improvements in skin and hair to announcing either the fast results or the long-lasting effects one can achieve by using of the product.

5.1.4 Types of opposites

Types of opposites were the third most frequently used paradigmatic sense relation with identical percentages, as both years, 29% of the advertisements had used opposites (22 of 75 adverts in 1990 and 37 of 129 adverts in 2013). There were, however, differences in which products were advertised with the help of types of opposites, as in 1990 they were most common in hair product advertisements and in 2013, when advertising makeup products (see Figure 8, page 47).

Figure 8. The use of types of opposites in advertising different product groups



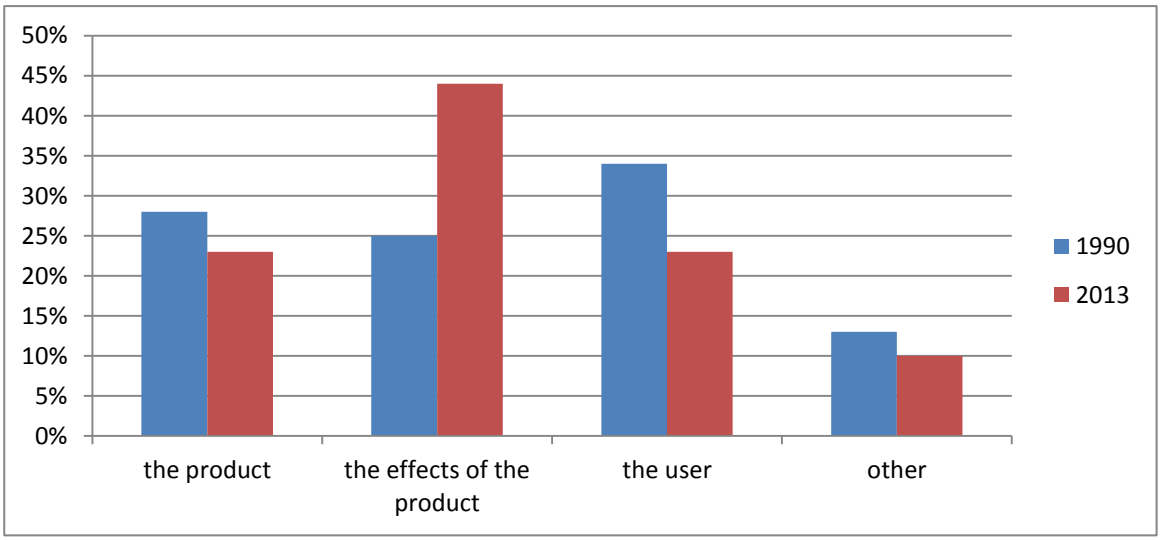
Starting with the 1990 hair care product advertisements, while "ordinary conditioners…simply coat the outside of the hair, Hair Restructurant actually works on the inside" (Wella Balsam Hair Restructurant, *EUK*1990). The advert for Ginza – hair products (*G*1990), on the other hand, promises to tell you "What's coming? What's going? What's in? What's out?" All these three pairs belong to the class of directional opposites (Löbner 2002, 90-91), and the verbs *come – go* are more specifically reversives (Cruse 2011, 160). All these opposites serve to emphasize the good qualities of the product advertised.

In the 2013 adverts for makeup and skincare products, there were many opposite pairs in describing the various shades of the product. The adjectives *dark* and *light* occurred in many advertisements, either as an opposite pair or opposed with other adjectives. The advert for Maybelline Master Smoky Shadow-Pencil advices the reader to "use Expert Smudger to perfectly blend dark to light"; L'Oréal Visible Lift CC Cream comes in two shades, light or medium, and it "reduces dark spots"; and L'Oréal True Match Super-Blendable Makeup has "33 shades – light to dark, warm, neutral or cool" (all *ISN*2013). The pair *dark – light* is an example of polar antonymy, as the adjectives are at the opposite ends on a scale of "brightness" (Löbner 2002, 89). The pair *warm – cool*, on the other hand, represents equipollent antonymy as there is no impartial term

(Cruse 2011, 157). The adjectives *dark* and *light* had both years also other opposite pairs: Lancôme DreamTone Customized Skin Tone Correcting Serum (*ISS*2013) has three shades, customized for fair, dark and medium skin tone, and J.F. Lazartigue Salmon Protein Hair Restorer (*BV*1990) is "a light cream" that does not "make fine hair heavy and lank". The pairs *dark – fair* and *heavy – light* are also examples of polar antonyms (Cruse 2011, 156).

Also nail polishes were advertised with the help of opposites. Revlon Nail Enamel (*G*1990) plays with the converse pair *more – less*: "More Shine. More Colors. More Lasting. Now In Less Time." This advert contains also another pair of converses, the nouns *start – finish*. In the adverts for the modern versions of the same product in *In Style* September 2013, Revlon Colorstay Longwear Nail Enamel and Revlon Brilliant Strength Nail Enamel, there is another opposite pair, *base – top*. This, too, is an example of a converse relation. A more practical use of opposite relations was found in the advertisements for O.P.I's San Francisco Collection (*ISS*2013) and Mariah Carey Holiday – collection (*ISN*2013), where the various shades are presented "from left to right, top to bottom". These pairs represent directional opposites (Cruse 2011, 160).

Figure 9. The purpose for using types of opposites.



As Figure 9 shows, there were substantial differences in the ways in which types of opposites were used in the cosmetics advertisements in 1990 and in 2013. In 1990, opposites were most often

used in describing the user of the product, while in 2013 a clear majority of opposites occurred in situations where the effects of the product were described. Both years, the category "the product" was the second most common. In the 1990 data, the complementary pair *man – woman* (Cruse 2011, 154-155) was used to describe the user of the product in two different ways: "Jean-Francois Lazartigue believes it is the right of every man and woman to have beautiful, healthy hair" (J. F Lazartigue –hair products, *BV*1990), while Sporty Clean Secret –deodorant (*G*1990) is "Strong enough for a man…but with a Sporty Clean scent for the active woman." Bergasol –tanning products (*EUK*1990) have products for people with *fair* or *dark* skin types, and also for those who have to "take it slowly" with tanning or to those who want "Fast Tanning products". The pairs *fair – dark* and *fast – slowly* represent polar antonymy (Cruse 2011, 156)

As was already stated, in 2013 "the effects of the product" –category was clearly the most common as regards the use of types of opposites. The most common pair here was the converses *before – after* (Kearns 2006, 561), which was used accompanied with pictures before and after using the product in question. The similar effect was also accomplished with other opposite pairs: Aveeno Clear Complexion BB Cream helps "fade the look of marks from past breakouts" while protecting skin "from future damage", and with Bioré Pore Unclogging Scrub (both *ISS*2013), it is "Goodbye clogged pores. Hello smoother, softer skin." The pairs *past – future* and *hello – goodbye* are also examples of converses, as the same relation in time is expressed with reversed roles (Löbner 2002, 92).

Similarly to the use of measures discussed in Section 6.1.3, the opposite pair *day – night* was employed in describing products' long-lasting effects: StriVectin-AR Advanced Retinol -skincare products promise younger-looking skin "for night, day and eye", and L'Oréal Infallible Lipcolour (both *ISN*2013) promises to last "All day. All night." Opposites were also employed in advertising various anti-age –products: Helena Rubinstein Intercell Anti-Time Principle (*BV*1990) promises to "increase the proteoglycan in the skin", which will then reduce "the effect of wrinkling." The effect

of Elizabeth Arden Prevage Anti-aging + Intensive Repair Daily Serum (*ISS*2013) is: "Lines lost. Firmness found", and the advert for Olay Regenerist Micro-Sculpting Cream (*ISS*2013) has a clear message to the reader: "Stop trying to turn back time and start energizing your skin." All these verbs can be labelled as reversives, as they describe the situation from reversed perspectives (Löbner 2002, 92).

Types of opposites were thus used most often in hair product adverts in 1990, and in makeup adverts in 2013. In 1990 the purpose for using opposites was most often to describe the user of the product, while in 2013 opposites were employed in describing the effects of the product, especially when illustrating "before and after" –situations.

5.1.5 Homonymy and polysemy

Homonymy was not a commonly employed device in the cosmetics adverts studied, as there was only one advert in 1990 that had used homonymy (1%), and two in 2013 (2%). All of the instances of homonymy were more precisely homophones (Jackson 1988, 4), and they were used to create wordplay. The advert for Maybelline No Problem Mascara (*G*1990) plays with the pair *no-know*: "It's no mistake. It's know-how." The wordplay is further emphasized with the parallel sentence structure, as well as the advert's layout, in which the sentences are placed on their separate lines. In *In Style* September 2013, both O.P.I and L'Oréal make use of homophones in advertising their nail polishes. O.P.I San Francisco Collection includes shades such as "A-piers to be tan" and "I knead sour-dough", while L'Oréal Colour Riche Nail –polishes introduce "the next haute colors", one of them being "Now you sea me". In these, the corresponding homophones *appears, need, hot* and *see* have not been written out, but it is fairly easy for the reader to notice the double meaning as these (in this context) incorrect spellings stand out.

Polysemy, on the other hand, was used far more frequently in 1990 than in 2013: 12 of 75 adverts in 1990 had examples of polysemy (16%), while in 2013 polysemy was used in only two

adverts (2%). In the advert for ORLY nail polishes (*ISS*2013), it is stated that "Jeff Pink has continued to turn industry heads with his innovative products". Here, the noun *head* can be interpreted in two ways, either literally or in a more metaphorical sense:

> The uppermost part of the body of a human, or the front or uppermost part of the body of an animal, typically separated from the rest of the body by a more or less distinct neck, and containing the brain, mouth, eyes, nose, and ears. (*OED* s.v. *head n.*[1], sense 1a)
>
> A person to whom others are subordinate; a chief, a ruler, a leader, a commander. In later use also (usu. with *of*): a person in charge of a particular activity or function within an organization. (*OED* s.v *head n.*[1], sense 33a)

The sentence can thus be read as such that Jeff Pink is turning the actual body parts, or that he is making an impact on the industry leaders. The other example of polysemy in 2013 was found in the advertisement for L'Oréal Colour Riche Eye Shadow (*ISS*2013), where the reader is advised to "Get online. Get the look." The verb *get* is used in two interrelated senses: "With compl. indicating some change effected in the position or state of the object. (*OED* s.v *get* v., sense IV)" (get online) and "*trans*. To obtain, procure. (*OED* s.v *get* v., sense I)" (get the look). The two senses of *get* are used to attract the reader's attention, which is further emphasized by the parallel sentence structure.

In 1990 polysemy was most common in makeup advertisements. In the advert for Almay Pure Confection -makeup collection (*BV*1990), where the text of the advert ends in the question "Isn't it sweet?", the two senses of *sweet* are as follows:

> Pleasing to the sense of taste; having a pleasant taste or flavour; *spec.* having the characteristic flavour (ordinarily pleasant when not in excess) of sugar, honey, and many ripe fruits, which corresponds to one of the primary sensations of taste. Also said of the taste or flavour. Often opposed to *bitter* or *sour* (so also in *fig.* senses). (*OED* s.v *sweet adj.*, sense 1a)
>
> Pleasing (in general); yielding pleasure or enjoyment; agreeable, delightful, charming. (Only literary in unemotional use: cf. A. 3e) (*OED* s.v *sweet adj.*, sense 5)

One would probably first think that *sweet* is used in the second, more general sense, but as the whole advert is based on sweets-related vocabulary, the first sense is also possible. Other makeup adverts played with the literal and figurative meanings of words: you should "look to Optical Illusion Eye Rimming Pencil for an eye opening difference" (Coty- cosmetics line, *G*1990), Cover Girl Anti-Smudge Mascara (*G*1990) "doesn't mess around", and 17 Sheer Tint Moisturising Mousse (*EUK*1990) has "face value at £1.99". "Face value" here refers to both the literal and figurative meanings of the expression:

> **face value** *n.* the value printed or depicted on a coin, banknote, ticket, etc., especially when less than the actual value; (*fig.*) the apparent character, nature, worth, or meaning of a person or thing; chiefly in **to take (a person or thing) at face value**." (*OED* s.v *face n.*, COMPOUNDS C2.)

Revlon Nail Enamel (*G*1990), on the other hand, has "a tough, long-lasting finish" and its patent guarantees "the truest color from start to finish". Here, the joke is in the two senses of *finish*.

Polysemy was also utilized in advertising other products. With Finesse Revitalizing Formula "you can keep your perm on a roll", and pHisoDerm Skin Cleanser Conditioner (both *G*1990) urges the reader to "get your pHD. pHisoDerm." In the same advert the reader is also asked: "Are you puzzled by your combination skin?" and the picture of the advert is compiled of puzzle pieces. In the advert for Lux soap (*BV*1990), the noun *bar* was used in two different senses, which I first interpreted as an example of homonymy. The advert makes an intertextual reference to the movie *Casablanca* with the quote: "Of all the bars in all the world." The first meaning that comes to mind is that referring to a certain type of restaurant:

> A barrier or counter, over which drink (or food) is served out to customers, in an inn, hotel, or tavern, and hence, in a coffee-house, at a railway-station, etc.; *also*, the space behind this barrier, and sometimes the whole apartment containing it." (*OED* s.v *bar n.*[1], sense 28a)

But under the quote, there is a picture of a Lux soap bar, which brings rise to another meaning of *bar*, that is:

> A narrow four-sided block of metal or material as manufactured, *e.g.* of iron, or soap, chocolate, etc.; an ingot of precious metal. Cf. *bar-iron n.* at Compounds 2." (*OED* s.v *bar n.*[1], sense 3a)

At first, the two senses of *bar* do not seem to be interrelated, but there is a clear relation when one takes only their physical shapes in consideration. This example illustrates well how the changes in language can make it difficult to identify between homonymy and polysemy (Palmer 1981, 102).

All in all, both polysemy and homonymy were used first and foremost to attract the reader's attention, and they rarely contributed to giving any actual facts about the product. According to the data of this study, the use of this kind of word play is not as popular anymore as it was in 1990, which could partly be explained by the fact that the current consumers expect more factual information from the advertisers.

5.1.6 Syntagmatic sense relations

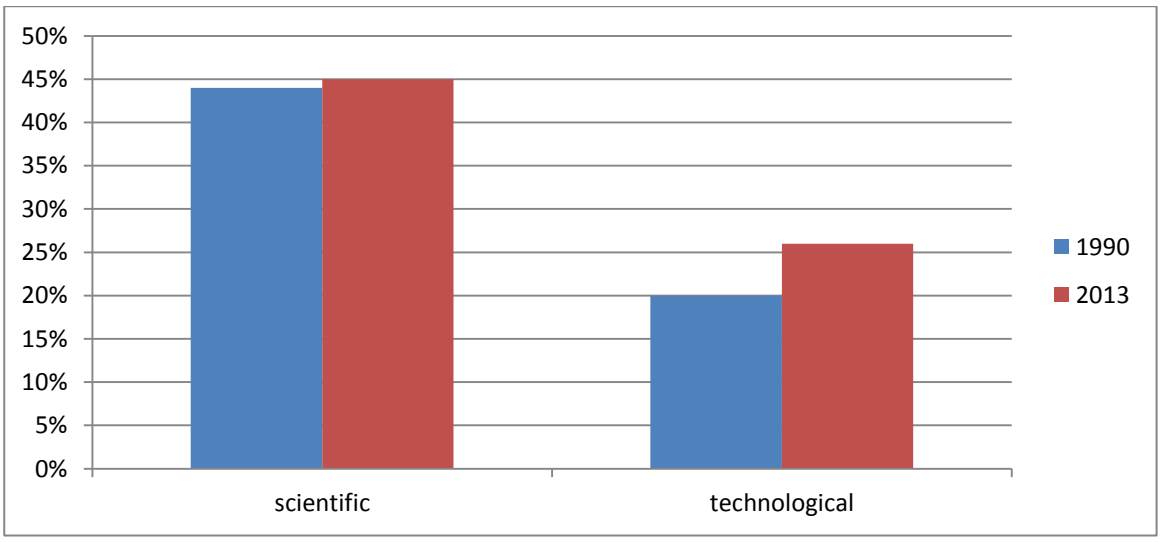
As was already stated at the beginning of this chapter, the use of unusual syntagmatic combinations was not a very popular technique in the advertisements, with the percentages 4% (3 of 75 advertisements) in 1990 and 10% (13 of 129 advertisements) in 2013. In the 1990 advertisements, Clinique Daily Eye Benefits (*G*1990) urges the reader to "Feast Your Eyes", Chanel's Hydra-Système is "for thirsty skin", while N^{o}7 Pure Care Mousse (both *BV*1990) has got "plenty of nothing". The phrase "plenty of nothing" is a paradox (Cruse 2011, 187), while both *feast* and *thirsty* would normally require an animate subject and thus collocational restrictions are violated (Cruse 1986, 279). This kind of personification was used also in the adverts from 2013: Aveeno Clear Complexion –skincare collection (*ISS*2013), is advertised with the headline "kills breakouts with a healthy dose of kindness", and the slogan for Clear Scalp & Hair (*ISB*2013) is "Feed scalp. Feed Beauty." The act of killing usually requires an animate subject to do it, while with the verb *feed* there is usually an animate being that is fed.

Another examples of unusual syntagmatic combinations in the advertisements from 2013 included “explosive color” (Maybelline Color Tattoo Pure Pigments Up To 24HR Shadow), “lips in full bloom” (Clé de Peau Beauté Extra Rich Lipstick, both *ISS*2013) and “Get unfair hair” (Aussie Mega and Sprunch – hairsprays, *ISN*2013). The main reasons for using unexpected syntagmatic combinations were similar with the use of homonymy and polysemy, that is, to attract the reader’s attention with something unexpected and to play with additional meanings of the words. In the advertisement for Aussie hairsprays, the rhyme in “unfair hair” adds to the quirkiness of the language.

5.2 The use of scientific and technological vocabulary

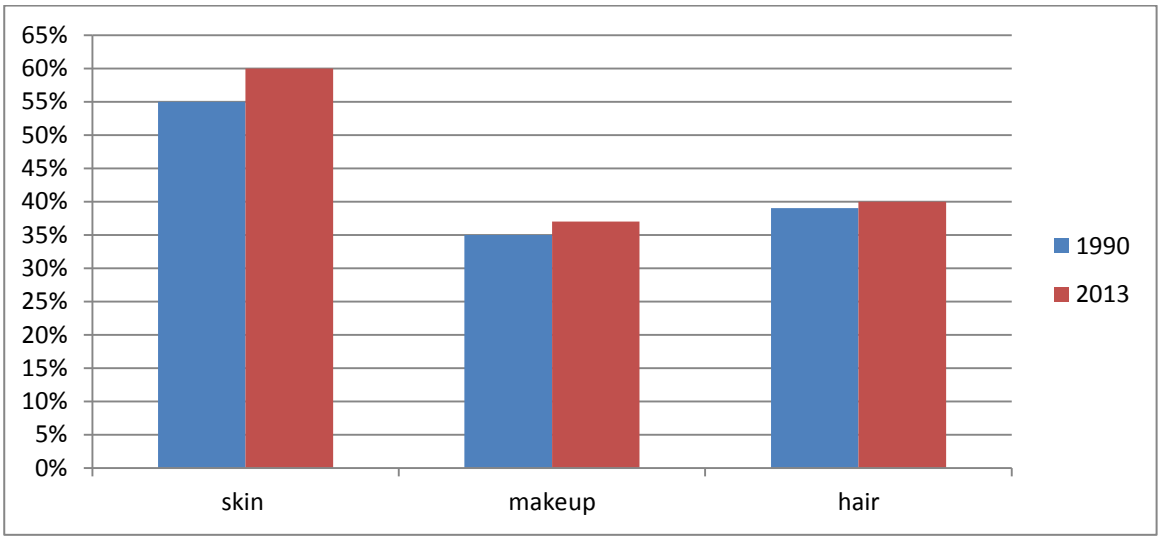
As Figure 10 shows, scientific vocabulary was far more common than technological vocabulary, and both scientific and technological words were used more often in 2013 than in 1990, although the difference in the amount of scientific vocabulary is quite minimal.

Figure 10. The use of scientific and technological vocabulary in the data



As regards scientific vocabulary, it was used in 44% of the adverts in 1990 (33 of 75 adverts) and in 45% of the adverts in 2013 (58 of 129 adverts). Scientific words were especially common in advertising skincare products (see Figure 11).

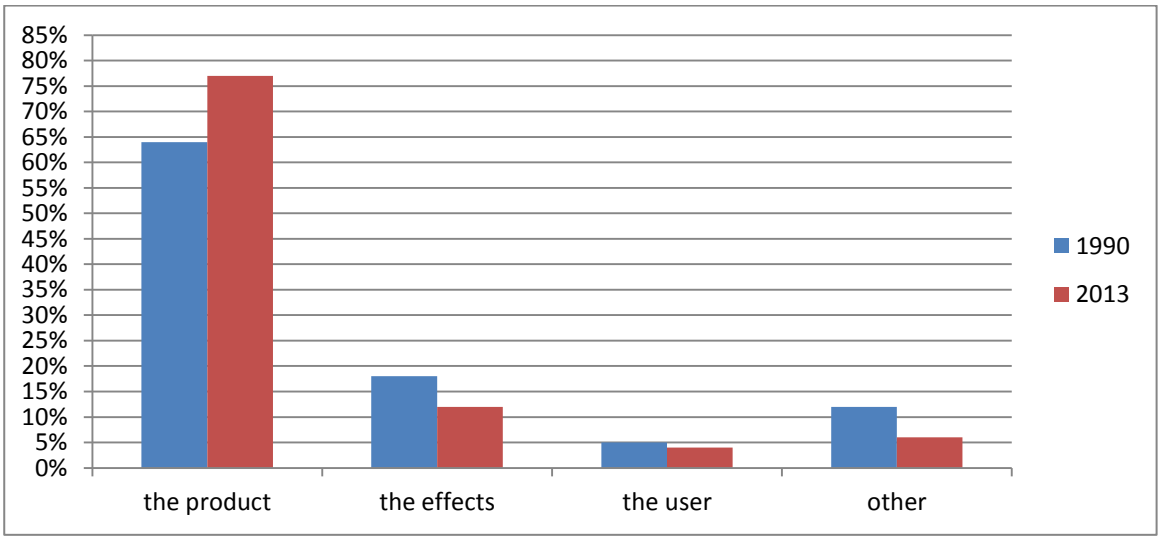
Figure 11. The use of scientific vocabulary in advertising different product groups



Especially anti-aging products were advertised with the help of scientific vocabulary. Helena Rubinstein Intercell Anti-Time Principle "contains a new ingredient – Transglycanes, which has been shown to increase the proteoglycan in the skin", Lancôme Niosôme Système Anti-Âge creates "biomimetic action", and Chanel Hydra-Système (all *BV*1990) has "hygroscopic elements" that absorb water, it "replenishes the skin's natural ceramides", and "at the base of the epidermis, the Biocéamine in the Hydra-Système improves your skin firmness and elasticity." The words *Transglycanes, proteoglycan, biomimetic, hygroscopic, ceramides, epidermis* and *Biocéamine* all exemplify scientific vocabulary. There were similar examples in the anti-age adverts of *In Style* September 2013 as well. L'Oréal Paris Youth Code Texture Perfector has "2% patented LR2412", while Clarins Double Serum Complete Age Control Concentrate is a "Hydric + Lipidic System" that is "powered by 20 pure plant extracts and potent high-tech molecules". StriVectin-AR Advanced Retinol Day Treatment SPF 30, on the other hand, offers "potent, multi-action anti-aging with NIA-114® and Retinol". An interesting development between the two years is that in 1990,

there were more explanations to the scientific words used – for example, Almay Stress Cream (*G*1990) "contains a special ingredient that is like a molecular sponge" – whereas in 2013, explanations were very rare.

Figure 12. The purpose for using scientific vocabulary

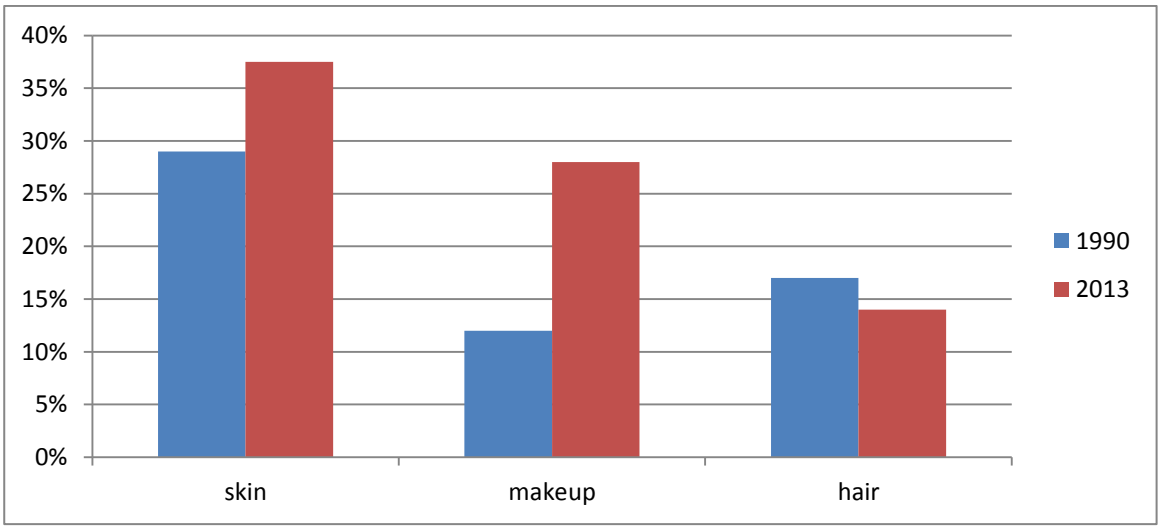


As regards the purpose for using scientific vocabulary, it was clearly most common in describing the product (Figure 12). A common phenomenon was to list ingredients that the product *does not* include: Neutrogena Moisture SPF 15 Formula (*G*1990) is both "PAPA-free" and "non-comedogenic", Caviar Anti-Aging Haircare (*ISS*2013) is "100% free of: parabens, sulfates and phthalates", Neutrogena Naturals Multi-Vitamin Nourishing Moisturizer and Night Cream (*ISN*2013) has "NO harsh chemical sulfates, parabens, petrolatum, dyes, phthalates" and Zoya Nail Polish (*ISS*2013) "contains no formaldehyde, formaldehyde resin, toluene, dibutyl phthalate or camphor." These examples illustrate fairly well the "name-dropping" function of scientific vocabulary (Leech 1966, 101); not every reader of a women's magazine knows what "phthalates" or "camphor" are, but they make the product sound more reliable and professional.

As was already stated, technological vocabulary was not as frequently used as scientific vocabulary: in 1990, 15 of 75 adverts (20%) had used technological vocabulary, and in 2013 the percentage was 26% (34 of 129 adverts). As with scientific vocabulary, technological vocabulary

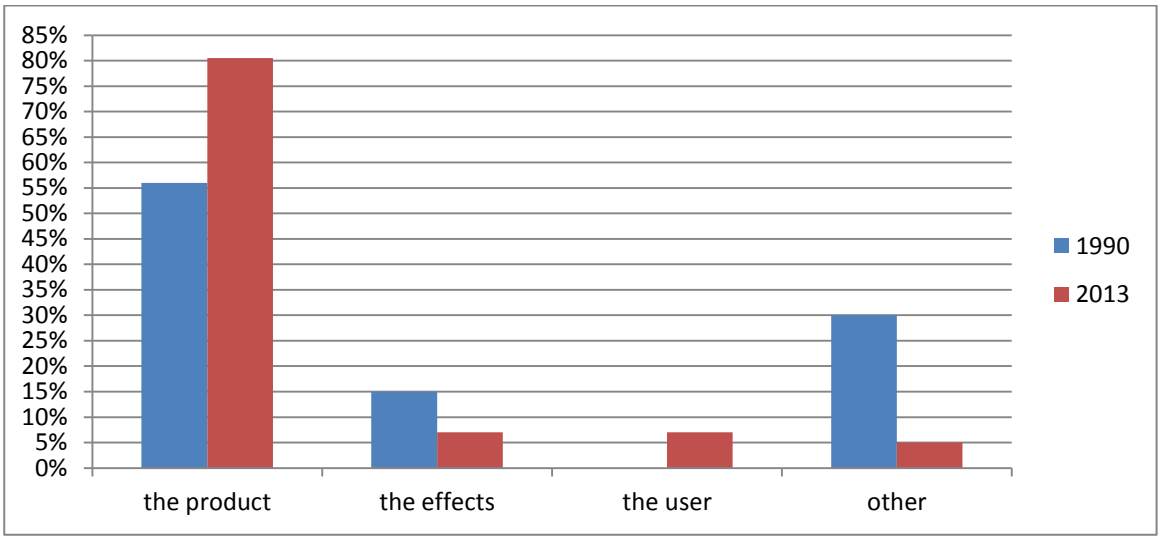
was most frequently used in advertisements for skincare products. Technological vocabulary was clearly more common in makeup advertisements in 2013 than in 1990 (see Figure 13).

Figure 13. The use of technological vocabulary in advertising different product groups



Examples of technological vocabulary in skincare product advertisements include *communication, process, function, component* (Helena Rubinstein Anti-Time Principle, *BV*1990), *eye tech efficiency, support system* (Clinique Daily Eye Benefits, *G*1990), *sonic foot smoothing system* (Clarisonic Pedi, *ISN*2013) and *pixel-level* (L'Oréal Paris Youth Code Texture Perfector, *ISS*2013). Makeup advertisements in *In Style* September 2013 used technological vocabulary quite innovatively: for example, the "micro-brush" in Maybelline The Falsies Big Eyes Mascara "grabs every tiny bottom lash for a full-circle effect", Smashbox Liquid Halo HD Foundation's "Breakthrough Liquid Light Technology mimics photo filters to blur imperfections", and Origins Smarty Plants CC is a "high-tech hero".

Figure 14. The purpose for using technological vocabulary



As Figure 14 shows, technological vocabulary was most common in describing the product. Here, the word *technology* was used with various pre- and postmodifiers, such as *cutting edge technology* (L'Oréal Colour Supreme Lipstick, *G*1990), *gel technology* (L'Oréal Infallible Lipcolour, *ISN*2013), *exclusive ChronoluxCB*^{TM} *Technology* (Estée Lauder Advanced Night Repair Serum), *Apple Stem Cell Technology* (Aloxxi – hair products) and *Liquid Sand*^{TM} *technology* (San Francisco Collection by OPI, last three *ISS*2013). The examples correspond to Johnson's (2008, 164-165) notion of the fact that the word *technology* can be used in most situations to add to the reliability of the product. In 1990 there were quite a few cases labeled under the category "other". For example, the advert for Sebastian Laminates Spray (*G*1990) mentions that the product continues their "quest for environmental technology in hair care", while René Guinot - skincare products (*BV*1990) give best results when "combined with proven electro-massage techniques." Piz Buin (Piz Buin Sun Allergy Lotion, *EUK*1990), on the other hand, offers "free Piz Buin personalised computer assessment on trouble-free sun-tanning". It is worth mentioning that there were no instances of technological vocabulary used to describe the user of the product in 1990 – this is the only linguistic feature where there is a category with zero instances.

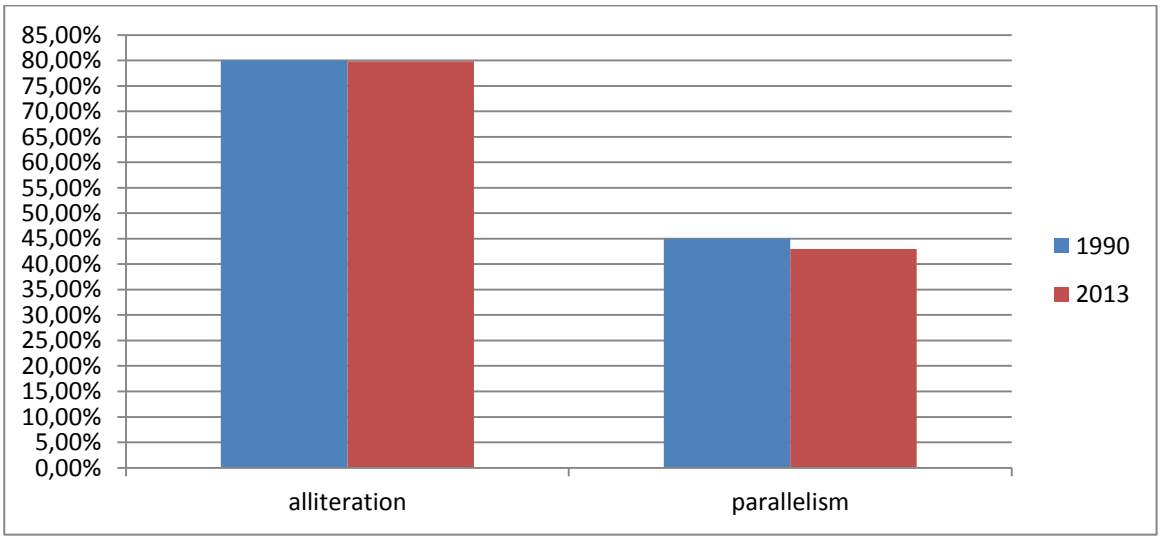
In sum, scientific vocabulary was a fairly regular feature of cosmetics adverts, while technological vocabulary was not as frequently used. They both were most often employed in

describing the ingredients or technology behind various cosmetics products. Scientific vocabulary was especially common in adverts for anti-aging products, while the word *technology* was employed in advertising everything from lipsticks to hair products.

5.3 The use of alliteration and parallelism

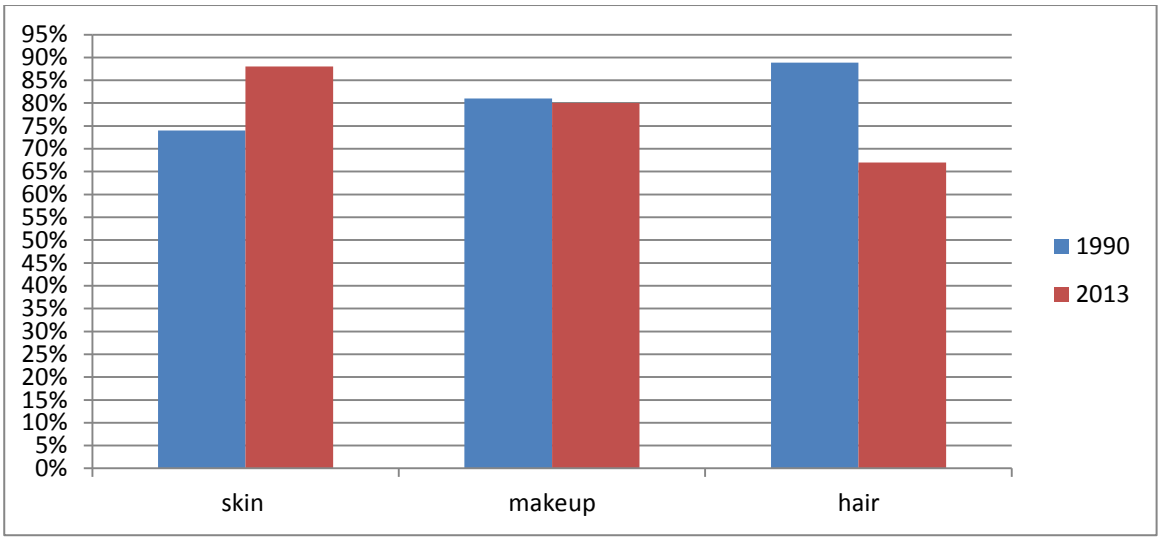
Alliteration and parallelism, which were the two most traditional linguistic features studied, were a common feature of cosmetics advertisements. As can be seen from Figure 15, alliteration was substantially more common than parallelism in both years, and the amount in which these linguistic features were used was fairly similar between 1990 and 2013, although alliteration was a little more common in 2013 and parallelism in 1990.

Figure 15. The use of alliteration and parallelism in the data



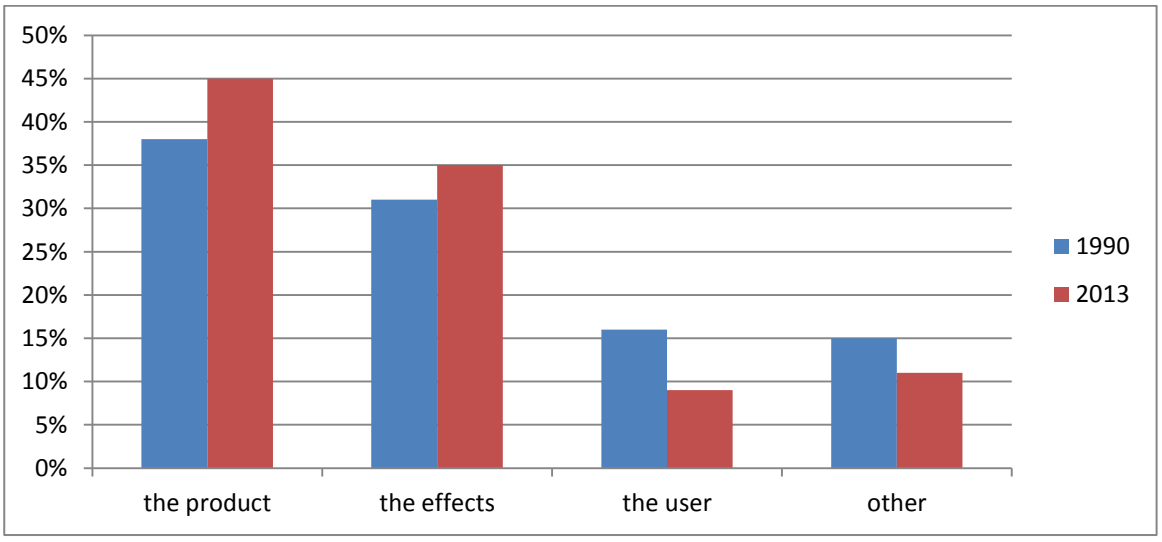
Of all the linguistic items studied, alliteration was clearly the most frequently employed, as it was both years found in 80% of the advertisements (60 of 75 advertisements in 1990 and 103 of 129 advertisements in 2013). In 1990 alliteration was most common in hair product advertisements, and in 2013 when advertising skincare products (see Figure 16, page 60). Overall, alliteration was used very frequently in advertising all product groups.

Figure 16. The use of alliteration in advertising different product groups



Examples of alliteration in hair product adverts from 1990 are "fine flyaway hair" (Wella Balsam Hair Restructurant, *EUK*1990), "soft and shiny" (Perma Soft), "color is critical" (Neutrogena Shampoo and Conditioner), and "healthy hair" (Sebastian Laminates Spray, last three *G*1990), while skincare products were advertised in 2013 with alliterations such as "fine fragrance" (Caress Tempting Whisper Body Wash, *ISB*2013), "professional pedicure maintenance" (Clarisonic Pedi, *ISN*2013) and "natural nighttime purification processes" (Estée Lauder Advanced Night Repair Serum, *ISS*2013).

Figure 17. The purpose for using alliteration



As regards the purpose for using alliteration, it was both years most common in describing either the product or its promised effects (see Figure 17, page 60). In 1990, alliteration was very common in product names, such as *Cristal Soleil Superblonding Spray* (*EUK*1990), *Estée Lauder More than Mascara, Elizabeth Arden Cashmere Colors, Caress Body Bar* and *Coty Correctives* (last four *G*1990). In 2013 this use of alliteration was not as common, although there were some examples, such as Revlon's *Nearly Naked Powder* and *Super Lustrous Lipstick* (both *ISS*2013). On the other hand, alliteration was used abundantly in naming nail polishes, with examples such as *Lost on Lombard, Muir Muir on the wall, In the Cable Car-Pool, First Date at the Golden Gate* (O.P.I San Francisco –collection, *ISS*2013), *In My Santa Suit, Ski Slope Sweetie, Silent Stars Go By* (Mariah Carey Holiday by O.P.I –collection) and *toggle to the top, mind your mittens, parka perfect, warm & toasty turtleneck* (Essie Winter Collection, last two *ISN*2013). The names tell very little about the actual shades of the product, so it is safe to assume that alliteration has been used to make the names stand out.

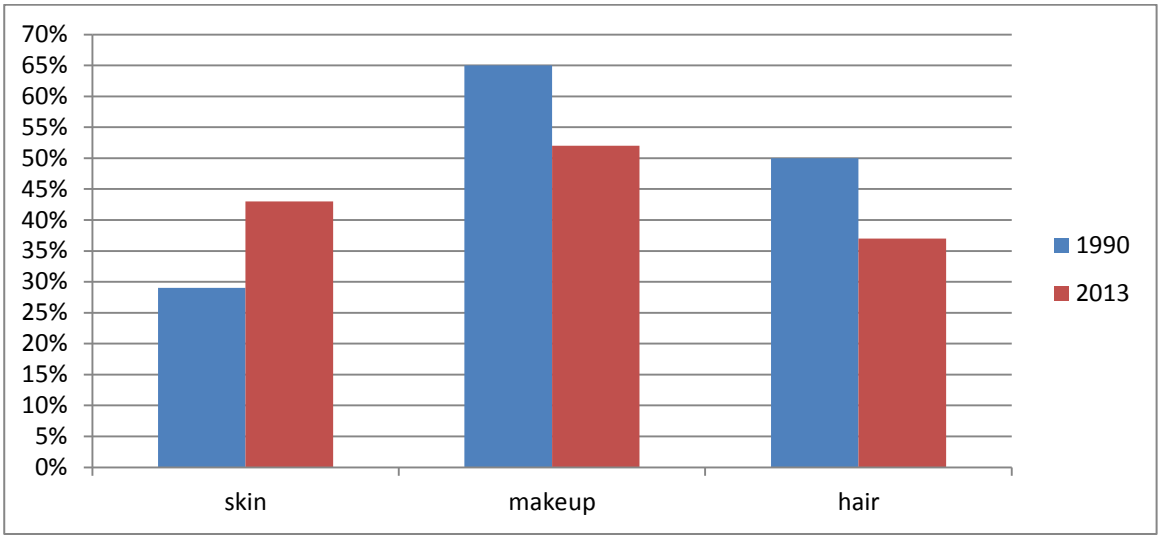
Examples of alliteration describing the effects of the product in the adverts from 1990 include "lengthens lashes" (Almay Longest Lashes Mascara, *G*1990), "builds body" (Freeman Papaya Hair Care Treatments, *G*1990), "won't stain or streak" (Rimmel –makeup collection, *EUK*1990) and "dramatically diminish" (Estée Lauder Eyzone Repair Gel, *EUK*1990). In 2013, this category included alliterations such as "keeps lips lush" (L'Oréal Infallible Lipcolour, *ISN*2013), "skin feels soft, springy" (Clinique Dramatically Different Moisturizing Lotion, *ISN*2013), "combats breaking and brittleness" (Revlon Brilliant Strength Nail Enamel, *ISS*2013) and "frizz-free hair with buoyant body" (Aloxxi – hair products, *ISS*2013).

In 1990, alliteration was fairly common also in the categories "the user" and "other". Examples of the first category include "Trainee Tanning Researchers" (Hawaiian Tropic - tanning products, *BV*1990), "Now you don't have to stay in the shade" (Piz Buin Sun Allergy Lotion, *EUK*1990) and "The most unforgettable women in the world wear Revlon" (Revlon Velvet Touch

Lipstick, *G*1990). Examples of alliterations under the category "other" are "specially selected salons" (Wella System Professional, *EUK*1990) and "Clinique Computer" (Clinique Daily Eye Benefits, *G*1990).

Parallelism, on the other hand, was not as common as alliteration: in 1990, it was used in 45% of the adverts (34 of 75 adverts), and in 2013 the percentage was 43% (56 of 129 adverts). Both years, parallelism was most often used in makeup advertisements (in over 50% both years), followed by hair products in 1990 and skincare products in 2013 (Figure 18).

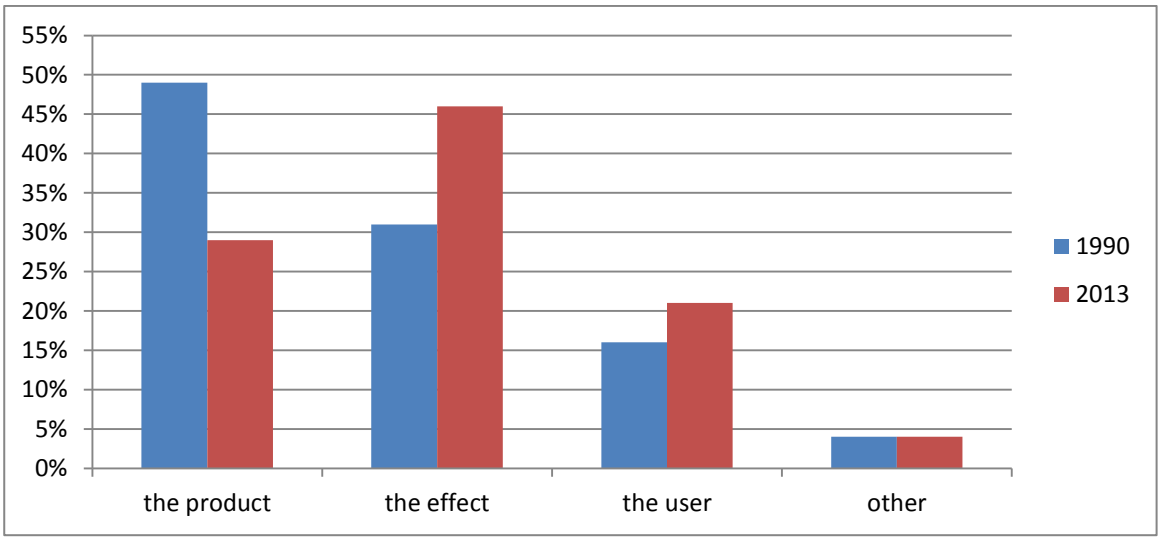
Figure 18. The use of parallelism in advertising different product groups



Examples of parallelism in makeup adverts from 1990 include "Nothing Looks Like It. Nothing Feels Like It. Nothing Lasts Like It." and "Imagine a sultry velvety finish. Imagine a sumptuous, velvety feel. Imagine colors so potent – they last for up to 6 glorious hours", both from the advertisement for Revlon Velvety Touch Lipstick (*G*1990), as well as "Made up by D.H. Lawrence. Made up by Rimmel." and "The accent's on bronze. The emphasis is on a naturally tanned look" that appeared in the advert for Rimmel –makeup collection (*EUK*1990). In 2013, the parallel structures were more muted, such as "Less makeup. More coverage." (bareMinerals ORIGINAL Foundation) and "Created. Tested. Photographed" (Smashbox Liquid Halo HD Foundation, both *ISS*2013). The Maybelline slogans from 1990 and 2013 are also examples of

parallelism: “Smart. Beautiful. Maybelline.” and “Maybe she’s born with it. Maybe it’s Maybelline”, respectively.

Figure 19. The purpose for using parallelism



As Figure 19 illustrates, in 1990 parallelism was most common in describing the product advertised, while in 2013 the largest category was “the effects of the product”. Examples of parallelism in describing the product in *Glamour* September 1990 include “Flakeproof. Smudgeproof. Water-resistant too.” (Almay Longest Lashes Mascara), “LaCOUPE is LaFashion for LaHair” (LaCOUPE-hair products) and “Color rich. Moisture rich.” (Maybelline Moisture Whip Mascara). In 2013, the effects of the product were described for example in the following ways: “Skin is left flawless. Radiant. Smooth. Guaranteed.” (Clarisonic Deep Pore Detoxifying Solution), “Brightens – Protects – Illuminates.” (masque BAR by LOOK BEAUTY) and “Instantly – On demand – Over time” (Origins Smarty Plants CC, all *ISS*2013).

In comparison to other linguistic features studied, parallelism was both years used quite frequently to describe the user of the product. Examples from 1990 include “Stressed? Tired? Overworked?” (Wella System Professional, *EUK*1990), “Think. Feel. Experience.” (Cover Girl Soft Radiants Eye Shadow, *G*1990) and “Blend In, Stand Out” (Maybelline Blooming Colors Eyeshadow, *G*1990). The interrogative and imperative sentences used here correspond to Myers’

(1994, 49) notion on how these sentence types are employed in advertisements to create a sense of familiarity. In 2013, parallel structures describing the user include "Proven for all skin types, all ages, all ethnicities" (Clarins Double Serum Complete Age Control Concentrate, *ISS*2013) and "92% Said Their Skin Looked More Luminous – 87% Said Their Skin Felt Healthier – 80% Said Their Skin Looked Firmer" (Bobbi Brown Luminous Moisturizing Treatment Foundation, *ISS*2013). As the examples show, the ways in which the advertisements try to appeal to the reader are more emotionally charged in 1990 than in 2013.

All in all, alliteration was clearly the most frequently used linguistic feature found in the adverts, and it was especially common in product and shade names, as well as in describing the effects of the product. Parallelism, on the other hand, was more common in 1990 and also the language used in the parallel structures was more vivid than in 2013. In 1990, parallelism was most common in describing the advertised products, while in 2013 it was most often found in illustrating the promised effects.

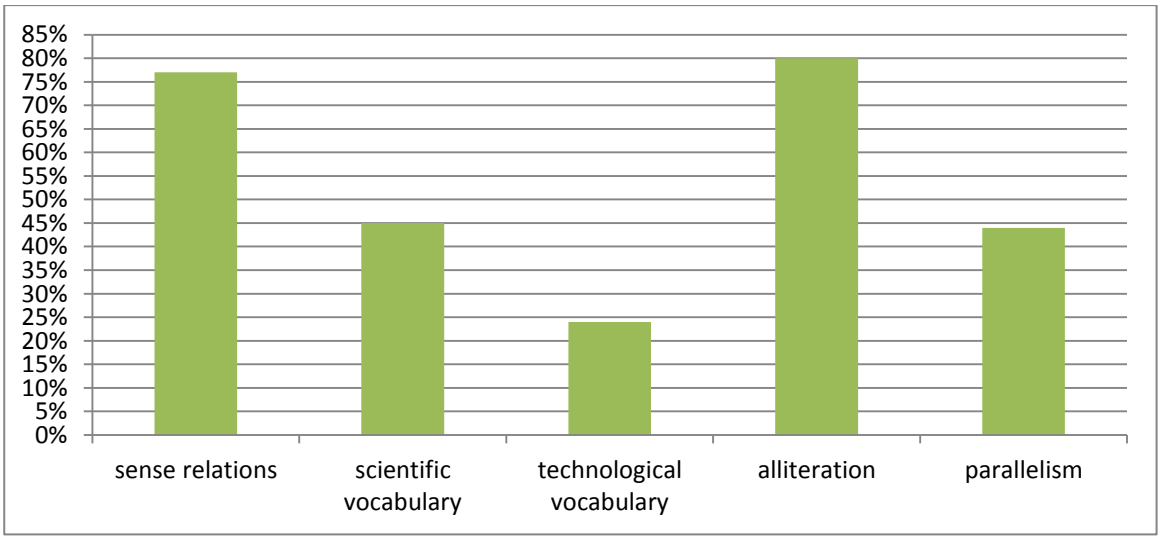
6 Discussion

In this chapter, the results presented in Chapter 5 will be discussed. Section 6.1 summarizes the results, answers the research questions and discusses the change in advertising language at a more general level, while Section 6.2 focuses on the limitations of the present study.

6.1 Summary of results

The data, 204 adverts, included many instances of the linguistic items that were chosen to be the focus of this study. 77% of the advertisements studied included one or more sense relation, which illustrates that sense relations are a viable part of cosmetics advertisements and thus an important area for research. Scientific vocabulary was used in 45% of the advertisements, technological vocabulary in 24%, alliteration in 80% and parallelism in 44% of the advertisements (Figure 20).

Figure 20. The amount of linguistic items in the data (204 adverts)



As regards the change in language, the analysis showed that there were not many differences in the amounts in which the linguistic items were used in the adverts. Synonymy and polysemy were more common in 1990, while meronymy and technological vocabulary were more often employed in the

2013 advertisements. With the other linguistic items, the amounts were fairly equal. More differences were found, however, in the ways in which these linguistic items were used in 1990 and in 2013.

The first research question was:

1. How are sense relations used in cosmetics advertisements?

Starting with paradigmatic sense relations, synonymy was used more often in 1990 than in 2013. In 1990, synonyms were most often employed in describing the effects of the product, and the synonymous pairs were quite vivid: an example was the advert for Maybelline No Problem Mascara (*G*1990), which promises "No clumps. No globs. No smears. No smudges." In 2013, synonyms were used most often in describing the actual product, and a common way to do this was to refer to the product with two different nouns, such as in the advert for Clearasil Daily Clear Refreshing Superfruit Wash (*ISS*2013) where the same product was referred to as both *wash* and *cleanser*.

Hyponymy was the most often used sense relation with circa 50% of adverts both years containing hyponymous relations. Although both years the most common way to use hyponymy was to present the different products of a cosmetics range, especially in advertising hair products, in 2013 hyponymy was used frequently to list various professions to add to the reliability of the product. An example was the advert for Simple –skincare collection (*ISS*2013), where a *makeup artist*, a *nutritionist*, a *dermatologist*, a *fitness expert* and a *psychiatrist* all give their tips on skincare and healthy living. Another difference between 1990 and 2013 was found in the color adjectives used in the adverts: in 1990 the colors were quite plain, while in 2013 there were colors such as *lilac, navy* (Revlon Nail Enamel, *ISN*2013), *burgundy* and *jade* (Olay Pro-X Microdermabrasion System, *ISS*2013).

Meronymy was more common in 2013 than in 1990, and especially in 2013 meronymy was a common feature of skincare advertisements, with examples such as "87% Firmer skin, 79%

Reduced wrinkles, 88% More even skin tone, 88% Less visible pores." (Clarins Double Serum Complete Age Control Concentrate, *ISS*2013). Both years, meronymy was most common in describing the effects of the product, and measures were used both years to describe either the long-lasting effects or the instant results of the product.

Types of opposites were most frequently used to advertise hair products in 1990, and in adverts for skincare and makeup products in 2013. Examples include "a light cream" that does not "make fine hair heavy and lank" (J.F. Lazartigue Salmon Protein Hair Restorer, *BV*1990), "Goodbye clogged pores. Hello smoother, softer skin." (Bioré Pore Unclogging Scrub, *ISS*2013) and "33 shades – light to dark, warm, neutral or cool" (L'Oréal True Match Super-Blendable Makeup, *ISN*2013). Types of opposites differed also in the purpose for which they were used. Types of opposites were the only linguistic item that had "the user of the product" –category as the largest one, and this was with the adverts from 1990. An example was the complementary pair *man – woman* that was used in two different advertisements: Sporty Clean Secret –deodorant (*G*1990) is "Strong enough for a man…but with a Sporty Clean scent for the active woman", while J. F Lazartigue –hair products (*BV*1990) are the "right" of "every man and woman". In 2013, types of opposites were most often used to describe the effects of the product: for example, Aveeno Clear Complexion BB Cream (*ISS*2013) helps "fade the look of marks from past breakouts" and it promises to protect the skin "from future damage", and the advert for a product from the same range, Aveeno Positively Radiant Daily Moisturizer (*ISN*2013) includes pictures "before" and "after 4 weeks" of using the product.

As concerns homonymy and polysemy, homonymy was very rare both years, but in 2013 it was used quite innovatively in the names of nail polishes such as A-piers to be tan (San Francisco Collection by OPI) and Now you SEA me (L'Oréal Colour Riche Nail, both *ISS*2013). Polysemy, on the other hand, was far more common in 1990 (16%) than in 2013 (2%), although the percentages were not that high either year. This was rather surprising, as polysemy has been

considered a prominent feature of advertising language (for example Myers 1994 and Goddard 1998). The results of this study suggest that polysemy and punning have somewhat lost their popularity, at least as concerns cosmetics advertisements. Nevertheless, polysemy was used in 1990, and it was most common in advertising makeup products: an example is the question "Isn't it sweet?" in the candy-themed advert for Almay Pure Confection -makeup collection (*BV*1990). The purpose for using both homonymy and polysemy was to create wordplay and attract the reader's attention.

Syntagmatic sense relations were also quite rare, as only twelve of the 204 advertisements (6%) had used them. They were a little more common in 2013 than in 1990, and both years they were used to give the product the ability to perform animate actions: Chanel's Hydra-Système (*BV*1990) is "for thirsty skin", Aveeno Clear Complexion –skincare collection (*ISS*2013) "kills breakouts with a healthy dose of kindness", and Clear Scalp & Hair (*ISB*2013) –hair products *feed* both scalp and beauty. Overall, the reason for using syntagmatic sense relations was similar with polysemy and homonymy, that is, to get the reader to react to the quirkiness of the language.

The second research question concerned specialized vocabulary:

2. How is scientific and technological vocabulary used in cosmetics advertisements?

Scientific and technological words were both a little more common in 2013 than in 1990, but the difference was not substantial, which was rather surprising, as the technological innovations over the past 25 years have been quite drastic. Scientific vocabulary was most common in advertising skincare products, especially anti-aging products, and the purpose for using scientific words was to describe the actual product. Here it was especially common to list the ingredients that the product did not have, such as "NO harsh chemical sulfates, parabens, petrolatum, dyes, phthalates" (Neutrogena Naturals Multi-Vitamin Nourishing Moisturizer and Night Cream, *ISN*2013).

Scientific vocabulary was especially in 2013 used in the "name-dropping function" as mentioned by Leech (1966, 101); in 1990, there were some explanations for the scientific terminology, such as Almay Stress Cream's (*G*1990) "special ingredient that is like a molecular sponge".

The use of technological vocabulary also corresponded to previous remarks on advertising language: as pointed out by Johnson (2008, 164-165), the word *technology* can be used with all kinds of modifiers to make the product sound efficient and reliable. Examples included *cutting edge technology* and *exclusive ChronoluxCB*^{TM} *Technology* (Estée Lauder Advanced Night Repair Serum, *ISS*2013). In 1990 technological words were most common in skincare advertising, whereas in 2013 both skincare and makeup products were advertised with the help of technological vocabulary, such as *pixel-level* (L'Oréal Paris Youth Code Texture Perfector) and "high-tech hero" (Origins Smarty Plants CC, both *ISS*2013).

The third research question focused on the linguistic items regarded the most typical in advertising language:

3. How are alliteration and parallelism used in cosmetics advertisements?

Not unexpectedly, alliteration and parallelism were used extensively both years. Alliteration was by far the most frequently used linguistic phenomenon, with 80% of the adverts (163 of 204 advertisements) including alliteration in their copy. In 1990, alliteration was most common in hair product advertisements, with examples such as "fine flyaway hair" (Wella Balsam Hair Restructurant, *EUK*1990) and "color is critical" (Neutrogena Shampoo and Conditioner, *G*1990), while in 2013 it was most often employed in advertising skincare products in ways such as "natural nighttime purification processes" (Estée Lauder Advanced Night Repair Serum, *ISS*2013). Both years, it was most common in describing the product, followed by the category "the effects of the product", but in 1990 also the categories "the user of the product" and "other" were quite well

represented. In 1990, alliteration in product description was often found in the names of products, such *Estée Lauder More than Mascara* and *Coty Correctives* (both *G*1990), while in 2013 especially nail polishes were given shade names that employed alliteration: *Lost on Lombard* (O.P.I San Francisco –collection, *ISS*2013), *Ski Slope Sweetie* (Mariah Carey Holiday by O.P.I – collection) and *parka perfect* (Essie Winter Collection, last two *ISN*2013) were just a few of the examples.

Parallelism, on the other hand, was in 1990 most common in describing the product, such as "Flakeproof. Smudgeproof. Water-resistant too." (Almay Longest Lashes Mascara, *G*1990). In 2013, it was most often employed in describing the effects of the product, as in the advert for masque BAR by LOOK BEAUTY (*ISS*2013): "Brightens – Protects – Illuminates." The parallel structures in 1990 were more vivid and descriptive, while in 2013 parallelism mostly served the purpose of listing the promised effects of the product. Parallelism was also a persistent feature in slogans, as exemplified by the Maybelline slogans "Smart. Beautiful. Maybelline." (1990) and "Maybe she's born with it. Maybe it's Maybelline" (2013).

The fourth and final research question was:

4. Based on the use of these linguistic items, how has the language of cosmetics advertisements changed from 1990 to 2013?

The data illustrates that most of the linguistic items that were chosen as the focus of this study are a relevant and an important part of the language of cosmetics advertisements. Only syntagmatic sense relations, homonymy and polysemy were used in less than 20% of the advertisements, and five linguistic phenomena – hyponymy, alliteration, parallelism, scientific vocabulary (both years) and synonymy (1990) – were used in more than 40% of the adverts. As was already mentioned, the change is not illustrated in the amounts of these linguistic items, except for polysemy, which was used substantially less in 2013 than in 1990. The change in the amount of polysemy reflects a larger

change that can be seen in the data: the language in the adverts from 1990 was as a whole more vivid and imaginative, whereas the adverts from 2013 approached the potential customer with subtler methods. The change towards a subtler and more factual language is also reflected by both scientific and technological vocabulary being common in 2013 than in 1990.

The two most common categories as regards the purpose for which the linguistic items were used were "the product" and "the effects of the product." Usages that were categorized as describing the product varied from illustrating the available products in a certain cosmetics range or listing the shades of the product (hyponymy), referring to the product with two different nouns (synonymy) and telling about the various parts of the product (meronymy). "The effects of the product" –category included various types of usages, such as exemplifying before-and-after –situations (types of opposites) and explaining what the product does to different parts of the skin or hair (meronymy).

Overall, the change in language from a purely linguistic point of view is not that drastic. However, from a semantic point of view the advertisements and the language in them have changed quite a bit. The meanings and images conveyed through the adverts are different: in 1990, cosmetics products were often sold through sex appeal, witty parallel structures and word play, while the modern woman is approached with facts, references to technology and professionalism, and subtler language. Of course there are factual adverts from 1990, as well as "sensual" lipsticks sold in 2013, but the general atmosphere of the adverts has changed from flirtatious to more professional. However, although on the surface the language has changed, the underlying message both years is to emphasize the ways in which the product will improve the user's quality of life – and this corresponds to O'Donnell and Todd's (1991, 101-102) remark on the current emphasis on soft-sell advertising. Although the adverts from 2013 offer more factual information with their scientific and technological vocabulary choices, the products are still sold with the idea that they will not only make the consumer pretty, but also have a positive effect on other aspects of life.

6.2 Limitations of the study

As was already mentioned in Section 4.1, the fact that there were fewer advertisements from 1990 than from 2013 was one of the limitations for making more general assumptions based on this study. However, there were three magazines from both years and all cosmetics advertisements appearing in these magazines were taken into account, which adds to the reliability of the study as the advertisements were not selected based on their language. Also the amount of advertisements, 204 as a whole, is sufficient to make certain tentative generalizations. Another limitation regarding the data comes from the fact that all the magazines from 2013 were issues of *In Style*, and adding different magazines might have resulted in having different kinds of advertisements. However, as *In Style* is one of the largest advertisers in women's magazines, and there were advertisements from all three largest global advertisers in the cosmetics business – Procter & Gamble Co., Unilever and L'Oréal (Advertising Age Marketing Fact Pack 2014, 9) – the three magazines offered a versatile array of advertisements.

By selecting particular linguistic items to be the focus of my study I was able to get more precise results, and the comparison between different years was easier. The selection of these particular linguistic items was, however, also a limitation, as it may be that the changes in language were not confined to particular linguistic items, but rather to the overall language of the advertisements. As the results section above shows, in many cases the amounts of linguistic items were quite equal in 1990 and in 2013, although the language has changed. Through analyzing the instances of linguistic features from two perspectives, I was able to get more practical results as concerns the product groups, and as well more comprehensive results illustrating the purposes for which particular linguistic items were used for.

As the focus was on specific linguistic features rather than on the texts of the advertisements as a whole, a comprehensive account on why the language of cosmetics advertisements has changed

cannot be deducted on the basis of this analysis. That kind of analysis would require a different approach to the data, with analyzing larger strands of text for example with discourse analytical methods. The results of this study do, however, suggest that this kind of analysis could be fruitful and give insights on the changes that have happened in the language on a more general level. More ideas for future research are discussed in the final chapter of the thesis.

7 Conclusion

The purpose of this study was to examine how the language of cosmetics advertisements has changed from 1990 to 2013. The data of the study consisted of 204 advertisements found in six women's magazines, of which 75 advertisements came from 1990 and 129 advertisements from 2013. Before the analysis, the history of advertising and the typical features of advertising language were presented, as well as the theory behind various types of sense relations. The method chosen for this study was a combination of linguistic and semantic analysis, and the language of the advertisements was studied by choosing particular linguistic items as the object of the study. These linguistic items were the four paradigmatic sense relations – synonymy, hyponymy, meronymy and types of opposites – homonymy and polysemy, syntagmatic sense relations, scientific and technological vocabulary, and alliteration and parallelism. The instances found in the advertisements from 1990 were compared with those found in the 2013 magazines to see, how the language of cosmetics advertisements had changed.

The study showed that sense relations, scientific and technological vocabulary, and alliteration and parallelism are all important parts of the language of cosmetics advertisements, both in 1990 and in 2013. The sense relations were all used for different roles. Synonymy was used to create variation in language, while hyponymy was used for more practical reasons to tell about various products and shades, as well as to present the professionals recommending the product. Meronymy was used to give facts about the parts of the skin and hair, while types of opposites were especially useful in illustrating the situation before and after the use of the product. Homonymy, polysemy and syntagmatic sense relations all played a part in catching the reader's attention with unexpected wordplay. Scientific and technological words were used to make the product sound more reliable, with the listing of ingredients and technologies that make up the product. Alliteration

was especially common in product and shade names, while parallelism was a common feature of slogans.

As concerns the ways in which the language of cosmetics language has changed from 1990 to 2013, the linguistic and semantic analysis resulted in some general tendencies. The most notable differences were that synonymy and polysemy were clearly more common in 1990 than in 2013, while meronymy and technological vocabulary were used substantially more in 2013 than in 1990. Overall, the language in the 1990 advertisements was flirtatious, fun and vivid, while the advertisements from 2013 had more facts and professional opinions with the overall approach being more subdued.

The study shows that there has been change in the language of cosmetics advertisements, although as the changes have happened on a more general level, the linguistic items studied in this thesis may not have been the best possible illustrators of the change. This study does show, however, that sense relations, which have formerly been largely disregarded in studies of advertising language, are an important and intriguing part of advertising language, as they can be employed in creating relations in the texts and they all offer different possibilities for attracting the potential buyer. The thesis also shows that cosmetics advertisements are a good source for a linguistic analysis, and that they could be analyzed even more from a discourse analytical point of view.

As a whole, this study shows that change in the language of cosmetics advertisements in the past few decades has been subtle, but still noticeable. It would be interesting to see, whether a study like this conducted on other types of advertising, such as cars or beverages, would result in similar observations, or are these phenomena unique to cosmetics advertising. The present study could also be broadened with adding cosmetics advertisements from earlier decades, or with moving the scope of research towards more discourse-analytical approaches and discussing the possible reasons for

the changes. Also advertisements for cosmetics products designed especially for men could be studied, to see if the division of men as rational and women as emotional consumers noted by Schudson (1993, 61) and Myers (1994, 23) still exists.

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Glamour September 1990

In Style September 2013

In Style November 2013

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